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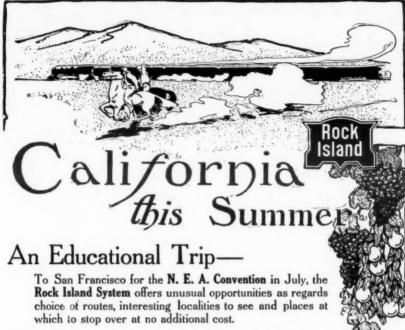
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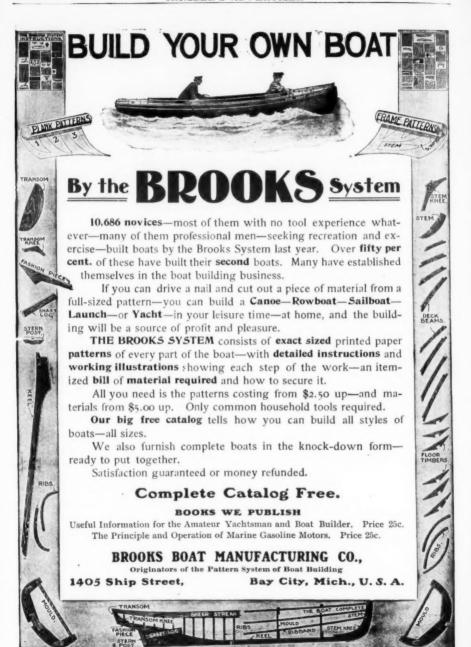
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AINSLEE'S

VOL. XVII.

MAY, 1906.

No. 4.





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crowned an island with an Italian

Surrounded as it was by terraces and parterres, the house seemed to float upon the ripples of the lake; for the formal gardens—green even in winter with hemlock and spruce—overspread every inch of the little territory except where it was already covered with glistening walls and fluted pillars, with portico and stately water stairs, with balustrades and colonnades, with fountains and with statuary.

All the cunning of Italian workmanship was brought across the seas, and the wilderness took on an exotic beauty, and the solitary place flaunted art in nature's face. The sound of hammer and of chisel startled the deer when they came down to the opposite shore to drink, and the great flat barges, built to ferry material for the villa's making, were a nine days' wonder to the woodsmen and the fishes.

James Douglas built slowly, as one who gaged his time by some occult

process; he even saw the last ilex planted, the pergola perched upon the knoll above the rose-garden, the stone baskets on the shoulders of the caryatids who upheld the terrace wall. All was in readiness before he and another sought sanctuary there—if sinners can seek sanctuary in a way that defies the moral law.

When a man loves as Douglas loved his cousin Bella, he develops a sixth sense. He knew exactly how far her heart would strain short of breaking, at what point her fine nature would revolt against the manikin to whom she was tied; and when, as he anticipated, her endurance snapped, he said: "Come, my beloved, together we will renounce the world."

Then it was they came to the palace in the lake, and Nature—the old materialist!—didn't care a rush! The birds sang as sweetly to them as if Heaven had set its blessing on their brows, and when, some months later, Bella was free to marry, through the complaisance of her husband, and she and Douglas were made man and wife, they asked each other whether the sun looked brighter or the lake more blue.

For one ecstatic year they lived and loved, and then retribution came—came with a justice that it often lacks. Douglas had been the tempter, and on him the sorrow fell, while Bella, with

happiness still shining in her eyes, closed them forever. She left an infant daughter, who ill replaced her in her husband's heart, though the new responsibility waked him out of his despair.

From the day of his wife's death till this story opens, more than forty years later, he never left his island

home.

During the first half of that weary time, life still held some interest for the bereaved man—he had his child to educate and love; but the latter half changed him to a misanthrope. The serpent's-tooth bit deep; the "thankless child" eloped with a wandering artist!

Retribution was satisfied.

CHAPTER I.

The May sun glared hotly through the half-clad trees upon a brownskinned, gray-eyed young man who was sending a pair of ponies along the road to the railway station at a pace quite inimical to their soundness of wind.

Maxwell Scott urged them to greater speed as the long whistle of the train warned him he would barely have time to cross the track ahead of the locomotive, and he swung the light buckboard over ruts and stones in the race with steam. They reached the platform, however, with a minute to spare, and Maxwell sprang out and examined his ponies anxiously, patting their noses and offering a mixture of apology and reproach that relieved his own feelings more than their distress.

"You overfed little devils!" he said caressingly. "I hope I haven't broken your wind, but who would have allowed more than ten minutes to do two miles? We'll take it slow going back, and you may bet your heads I shall give Ryan a raking for the way he manages the

stable!"

The roar of the train induced some caperings on the part of his charges, which proved their spirits unbroken, however it might be with their wind, and before they were thoroughly quieted a passenger got out of the

sleeping-car and joined Maxwell, by springing into the buckboard.

"How are you, Max?" he said. "Is anything very wrong with your uncle?"

"We don't know, Doctor Harper that's the reason we telegraphed for you. Nancy is in an awful state of mind."

"Go ahead, then," said the doctor, kicking his bag into safety between his feet. "It will take five minutes to bundle all that freight out of the train, and my time is golden—too precious to waste at a railway station. I must go back by the evening train."

He was a small, spare man, with a closely shaved face and gray hair; his clean-cut features expressed intelligent self-confidence, while energy vibrated in every muscle of his body.

Young Scott devoted himself to piloting the ponies under the locomotive's

nose before he answered:

"I wish you could stay longer, sir, though it is awfully good of you to have come at all—such a beastly long way. I think Uncle James is going blind, and William and I were in a dead funk, I can tell you, till your answer came. We can't manage him, and Nancy isn't much good."

"Nancy is getting old," said the doctor reflectively. "She must be seventy if she's a day. She came to the island with Mrs. Douglas, and stayed on after her death as nurse to the child—your cousin, Mrs. Fitzgerald; she was a

beautiful creature.

"I don't remember," said Max apologetically. "It was all so long ago, and Uncle James never talks about his affairs. He is a distinctly impressive person, isn't he? You would about as soon think of taking a liberty with the pope! Nancy thinks he's the greatest man on earth."

The doctor sighed. "One of nature's lords," he said; "born to rule, if it be only an island. Nevertheless, he is a lonely old man, with no one to look after him but a pair of scatter-brained nephews and a pack of servants."

He smiled indulgently on Max, as if a worse fate might overtake a man's old age than to be looked after by him, in spite of the implied reproach.

"William isn't scatter-brained," Max retorted. "He is the longest-headed fellow I know. Of course we have been away from Uncle James a great deal—we had to be educated, and—well, you know yourself it is dull on the island."

He had the grace to blush as he recalled his own vagrant habits, and, what was worse, felt that Doctor Harper must recall the months of reckless amusement he had spent in New York the winter before, when he was supposed to be studying law.

The doctor kept his eyes fixed on his companion while he said with an innocence that was almost—not quite—con-

vincing:

"A lady is needed there. I wish that his daughter had lived, or that he would acknowledge his granddaughter." He looked half frightened as he brought out the last word, like a naughty child who has set off a firecracker.

The effect exceeded his fondest hopes. Maxwell brought the ponies to a dead stop in his surprise.

"Granddaughter!" he repeated. "I didn't know there was a granddaughter. Surely you must be mistaken! I knew he had a daughter who ran away with somebody beneath her in position—a struggling artist, I think—and died in Italy half-a-dozen years ago, but I never heard she left a child. Why, Doctor Harper, that child ought to be

his heir, shouldn't she?"

The thought was so stupendous that he forgot he had brought the ponies to a standstill, and sat gazing down the woodland road, as unconscious of its beauties as of the impatience of his companion. The announcement was unsettling in its character. Here he was, an idle man of twenty-four, fitted for nothing except spending money, and confronted with the news that some one clse—some one of whom he had never before even heard—had a better right to his uncle's fortune than he and William.

The doctor found the sun oppressive, and the tender foliage of the maples and birches quite inadequate in the way of shade, and yet, having deliberately staged this little comedy, it did not become him to object to the waits between the acts. He ventured a remonstrance, however.

"When you get over the shock, you will perhaps oblige me by driving on," he said dryly.

Max drew his whip across the ponies'

backs with a show of temper.

"I believe in taking things coolly myself," he observed, "but when a man's whole scheme of life is wiped out in a sentence, he might be allowed a sec-

ond to readjust his ideas."

"Scheme of fiddlesticks!" said the doctor. "I have mentioned a fact that came to my knowledge professionally; and as it concerns your family, I told it to you because you seemed to me the most reasonable; but I begin to think I might better have kept it to myself. There is most certainly a Miss Fitzgerald, but that doesn't alter Mr. Douglas' will; a man has the right to leave his money as he pleases, and your uncle has chosen to make you and William his heirs. He repudiated his daughter when she married Fitzgerald, and there is an end of the matter as far as you are concerned."

"I beg your pardon," said the young man gravely, "but, as far as I am concerned, it is only the beginning. If he has a granddaughter living, she stands in her mother's place, and he has no right to repudiate her. I am sure William will think so, too. You must let me tell Bill, even if I tell no one

else."

The doctor raised his eyebrows. • He didn't endorse Maxwell's confidence in his cousin, but he could admire the fine sense of justice that threw self-interest

to the winds.

"Keep a tight rein on impulses, Max," he said, in the cynical tone he affected when he found his feelings stirred; "they are so apt to bolt with you. Do as you like about telling William—he won't believe it—but take my advice and say nothing to your uncle. It will do no good, and may cause him infinite pain. But in the future, if you choose to make over a slice of your

inheritance to this cousin, it would be a very gracious thing. Such a little would seem a fortune to her, poor child!"

"Then Doctor know her,

"Then you know her, Harper!" exclaimed Maxwell.

"Slightly," the doctor answered, becoming engrossed in the farm through which they were now passing. "How admirably that farmer of yours keeps up his fences; everything looks so shipshape.

Their road had emerged from the woods and ran between fields of grain, while beyond them the stables, hothouse, and cottages for the laborers gave to the little settlement the effect of a thriving village skirting the lake.

Maxwell perceived that the conversation had been side-tracked, and resented

it by a direct return.

"I think you might have told me last winter that I had a cousin living in New York, particularly if you knew she was poor, while I was squandering Uncle James' money. You have made me awfully uncomfortable!"

"I didn't know it myself until recently," the doctor answered, "but I might not have told you if I had. It would be so easy to offend her with any direct offer of money. She has the family pride, I can tell you!"

"Then why do you tell me now?"

burst from Max.

"Because, my dear fellow, I fear things are rather serious with Mr. Douglas-he might relent at the last and ask certain questions which I wish you to be able to answer. I don't know whether he ever heard of the child's existence, but if he has, he might be sorry at the end.'

"Was there any reason for my uncle's hatred for Mr. Fitzgerald bevond the fact that he ran away with his daughter?" asked Maxwell.

"Shiftlessness, and what your uncle considered abuse of his hospitality," the doctor answered, with a shrug. "When you drag a man like a drowning puppy from a sinking boat, and dry him by your fire, and dress him in your clothes, and order some local sketches from him as a gentlemanlike way of offering him

money, you don't expect him to steal your only child. The sketches were damned bad, too!"

"The fellow was a cad!" said Max-

"Your uncle made no outcry," the doctor went on, "but he never forgave. Mrs. Fitzgerald had a small fortune she inherited from her mother, and was independent of him, but still she regretted the estrangement, and tried to be reconciled with him after she had been living in Italy for several years, but her efforts were not successful. She never wrote again or came back to this country, and when she died he took no notice. Whether he ever knew she had a daughter, I cannot guess. Douglases are good haters."

Maxwell smiled faintly.

"Is my cousin attractive?" he asked. "Fine lump of a girl," the doctor grunted, feeling sure the coarseness of the praise would discourage further questioning, and he was right; nothing more was said, and in a moment they reached the shore of the lake, where a steam-launch was waiting.

The two gentlemen made no effort to keep up a sustained conversation as they were borne swiftly across the water: each was busy with his thoughts, and the thoughts were disquieting. Doctor Harper, a creature of his affections, had reason to fear that his visit was in the nature of a death sentence to his oldest and closest friend; Max, still aglow with the injustice of his uncle's conduct, was casting about in his mind for some course of action that should deliver him from the tyranny of his own incompetence. He had let his uncle's liberality sap his energies till the idea of self-support that had come to him with this hint of a more direct heir found him without resources.

As the boat neared the island, the doctor thought he had never seen it in

greater perfection.

Time had made little change either in house or grounds, except that the marble was more mellow in its tint, the trees more perfect in outline, the colonnades more wreathed in vines.

beautiful water stairs, leading up to the portico, had been recently embellished by a pair of stone lions of admirable workmanship; the great vases, set at intervals along the terrace balustrade, had been newly filled with flowers, and glowed orange and scarlet in the sun.

The launch had nearly reached the villa when a small sailboat swam into view, and its occupants, as if wishing to avoid observation, suddenly changed their course and stood out for the west shore. Maxwell's face was a study. Amusement, contempt, and some anger expressed themselves in rapid succession, but he offered no comment till the doctor put one of the searching questions he seemed to consider his accorded privilege.

"Surely that was William," he said, peering after the boat; "and pray who is the lady who so obligingly does the sailing while our young gentleman lies

a-dreaming?"

"It is Stella Fane, the gardener's daughter," Max answered, with some reluctance. "She is rather a superior person, and is going to surprise the world with her magnificent voice. William has interested himself in her career."

"So I should judge," said Doctor Harper, laughing. "She is handsome, if one can form an opinion at such a

distance."

"She is handsome, and clever; and far too ambitious to make a fool of herself, whatever she may succeed in making of William," Maxwell responded; and then, to his relief, the launch grazed

the water stairs.

Their arrival was evidently anticipated from within, for the great doors flew open, and two servants in picturesque livery dashed down the steps. One with a boat-hook—a gorgeous pole gilded and emblazoned in red and blue—held the side of the boat steady, while the other threw over the stairs—wet from the wash—a coco matting.

The doctor sprang ashore with the

agility of a boy.

"Here we are," he said, "at Isola Bella! I see 'The Lord of the Isle' keeps up his usual state." "Bless his aristocratic old heart, why shouldn't he?" Max retorted. "But the country people do not give the island such a pretty Italian name; they call it 'Fool's Island.'"

"Then may the fools outlast my time," said the doctor, "for they add to the picturesque. It strikes me, however, Maxwell, that a gondola would be more in keeping with your uncle's pose. Poor old James! Too much imagination, too much money, a quick temper, and the pride of Lucifer—how could any one expect him to be commonplace?"

They had crossed the portico, and were met at the door by the butler, a white-haired old man who had dispensed the hospitalities of the villa for years. The doctor was evidently a favorite with him, for, after an exchange of civilities he led the way to the dining-room, talking as he walked.

"I have coffee for you on the table, sir, for I fear you had a poor breakfast on the train. About Mr. Douglas, sir," he continued, as he pushed the doctor's chair into place; "he is very poorly, and it come on him so suddent. He wasn't a bit wus nor usual last week, when Mr. William come home from Italy and fetched five boatloads of pictuary and statutes, and Mr. Douglas he was out on the water stairs all day Monday, a-placin' of them new stone lionsyou remarked them lions, sir?-and one on 'em had the torsel broke off his tail, and Mr. Douglas wouldn't budge till he got it mended-so what with the sun on the water and the damp-for though it's warm for the end of May, it ain't warm for him-he was took sick that night, and his eyes has failed entirely."

"We are all getting old, Bond," said the doctor, "and we must learn to accept our lions as they come—even if their tails are without tassels—but perhaps I may succeed in mending Mr. Douglas this time, and then we'll try to make him more prudent. Are they ready for me up-stairs, Maxwell?" he asked, as young Scott put his head in the door. "No more coffee, thank you, Bond. Lead the way, Max, to your

uncle's room.'

He followed the young man into the hall—a spacious square, surrounded on the second floor by a gallery upon which the upper rooms opened—and together

they mounted the stairs.

Mr. Douglas' bedroom was in the southwest angle of the house, and opened on one side into the library, which was over the front door, commanding a superb view of the lake, and on the other into dressing-rooms and bathrooms that looked to the west. The suite had been Mrs. Douglas', and her husband had taken possession of it after her death, keeping everything unchanged.

At Max's light tap the door was opened by an old woman, whose broad, moon face was encircled by a frilled cap tied under her chin, while her voluminous dress of checked gingham was relieved by turned-over collar and cuffs and an enormous apron of black silk. Nancy had hit upon a costume that in-

spired the maids with awe.

The room was as black as a cavern—every ray of light having been shut out by Mr. Douglas' directions—and it was his voice only that guided the doc-

tor to his sofa.

"Ah, Harper!" he exclaimed. "It is kind of you to take this journey, but I fear my necessities warrant it. If you can't do anything for my eyes, I shall trouble you for a dose of prussic acid. I can't see my way to being blind." He laughed grimly at his joke.

"Let us see the extent of the mischief," the doctor answered, crossing the room to help Nancy throw open the shutters and keeping up a familiar

chat with her the while.

"That will do," he cried. "We don't want a cross-light—it is painful enough to him as it is. How young you keep, Nancy! You're as nimble as a cat. Push that armchair with its side to the window. Now, Mr. Douglas."

Maxwell, who was in the act of leaving the room, paused in alarm at his uncle's feebleness, as, in obedience to the doctor's voice, he slowly rose to his feet—a gaunt, white-clad figure, that seemed to sway under the weight of its own great shoulders. As he sank into

the chair by the window, Nancy untied his bandage, and the fine old face was revealed. His forehead was straight, though somewhat narrow, and the white hair sprang from it with the vigor of a mane. His nose was prominent and bony, and his lips sweet as a woman's, but when he was at his best, the sweetness was so overmastered by the keenness of his eyes that you almost doubted its existence. A mustache, carefully waxed, and a pointed beard, completed the incongruity of his appearance.

He bore the examination of his eyes, which must have seemed to him interminable, with admirable patience, and when finally the bandage shut out the torturing light, he ventured to ask his

fate

"Is there any hope?" he asked brokenly. His thin hands jerked in spite of his effort to steady them, and his lips twitched as they parted to let the

words escape.

"For your eyes?" the doctor said. "Every hope, if you will obey instruction; but in regard to your general health. I am bound to tell you that you are taking liberties that are simply foolhardy. You know as well as I do that what is latent may become acute. You must be careful. I shall be obliged to put you on the most rigid diet, and to send you a nurse—to assist Nancy," he added, seeing her chagrin.

"Nancy's nursing is all I need," the

older man answered haughtily.

Nancy burst into speech: "Oh, doctor dear, don't be sending us a trained nurse, with her newfangled ideas and hoity-toity ways! It is trained impertinence she'll be bringing to the island, and I'm not used to taking orders from young women."

"It is never too late to begin when you find others know more than you do," he said stiffly, subduing Nancy with "the sarcastic eye of him"; but with Mr. Douglas he felt more uncer-

tain of success.

"Your nurse will arrive to-morrow evening." he began, standing over the sofa. "She will send me a daily report, and I shall come to you when she deems it necessary. I shall be careful

to select a person of good sense and agreeable manners, and if you share Nancy's prejudices she need not be young, you know."

The eternal masculine lurked in the wreck on the sofa. "You needn't send

a frump!" he said tartly.

CHAPTER II.

A rather magnificent young person was walking up and down the platform of the Grand Central terminal, glancing now at the clock, now at the blackboard, with its doomsday record of delinquent trains. A wild flutter of interest manifested itself in her hand-some face when the man with the megaphone announced each arrival.

The distinction of Miss Kathleen Fitzgerald's appearance was not by the grace of her clothes; on the contrary, they owed whatever air they possessed to the way she wore them. Her gray coat and skirt were simple to plainness; her black straw hat unnoticeable, except for the charm of its outline; but she carried herself with a dignity a queen might envy, and her delicate features were statuesque in their repose.

At last the voice through the megaphone announced a certain Northern express, and as the great engine slid sighing into its groove, the girl in gray pressed with other expectant welcomers as near as possible to the iron gate.

A small, gray-haired gentleman emerged from the throng, nodded to the girl, and quickly drew her to the seats just outside the waiting-room.

"I congratulate myself upon' finding you disengaged," he said. "When did

you get my telegram?"

"Last evening," she answered; "and I have followed your instructions with fatuous docility, for now that I have bought my ticket and checked my trunk, I have changed my mind. I don't intend to go."

"Indeed!" he said, laughing. "Since when have you permitted yourself such freedom of choice? Cases were not so plentiful with a certain young lady three months ago as they appear to be to-day-or has some dashing specialist

cut me out?"

The girl flushed as she answered: "You know I would rather nurse for you than any one. I would take the worst case of contagion if you wished it, but, really, this is beyond me. I cannot go as a stranger to my grandfather's house, and I cannot stoop to ask his recognition."

"Apparently you were not so set against obliging me a little while ago, if you bought your ticket and checked your trunk; what changed you?"

"Sober second thought," she said sadly. "At first the absurdity of the situation tickled my fancy; it seemed so odd to be paid for my services by the person nearest to me in the world; and then it pleased me to go secretly to the place my mother so often talked of, and to be of assistance to that wicked old man. Oh, don't shake your head! He was cruel to his only daughter—he wouldn't forgive her when she begged hint. I confess it seemed like a romance to me. But I cannot do it. It is unreal, and I am no actress."

"Have you breakfasted?" he asked,

by way of answer.

She admitted that she had forgotten that detail, so he led the way to the station restaurant, where he ordered a substantial meal, and watched her lively interest in her food with some amusement. He ate little himself, but used the time in explaining her grandfather's condition, and making her understand that it was her intelligence rather than her relationship to the patient that had influenced his choice.

"Your train goes in fifteen minutes," he concluded, as the last strawberry disappeared between her pretty lips; "and you will reach Limpid at seven-thirty this evening. I have written out the most minute instructions for the treatment I require for Mr. Douglas"—here he handed her a paper—"and you will report to me daily by post as long as all goes well; by telephone if you see cause for alarm. Your care of his eyes for the next ten days must be unremitting—unremitting, do you understand? The least neglect may result in blind-

ness, and he must be spared that for the short time he has to live."

She made a dissenting gesture, but he frowned her into submission and

continued:

"You will find the old housekeeper, Nancy Boyle, installed as temporary nurse. You will use your utmost tact to get on with her, and if you fail tell her your name!"

He sprang to his feet and took a hurried turn up and down the almost deserted room, as if a problem had presented itself for the first time, and its solution taxed his resources.

ought to have remembered Nancy's devotion to your mother. Of course she will recognize you-the likeness is startling. I wish now that I had taken her into my confidence yesterday; but I did not mean to send you at first-I meant to send an older woman, till your grandfather said he wouldn't have a frump. Gad! but the old Adam dies hard in a man! Then I thought of you. It was one of those sober second thoughts you commend so highly"-here he smiled teasingly. "You will have to make a clean breast of the whole thing to Nancy, and tell her from me to hold her tongue. By the way, what had you better call yourself-Miss Smith?'

"I said I was not going," Kathleen answered, looking from under her long lashes, half defiant, half yielding.

"Ah, that was on an empty stomach," he responded. "Now that your courage is uplifted by a good breakfast, I expect a show of reason. Whatever your resentment toward your grandfather, remember he is an old man and your nearest of kin. Go to him, and do what you can for his comfort, and if it should lead to kindly feeling between you, a worse thing might befall a young woman than reconciliation with her family. If nothing happens, his twenty-five dollars a week is as good as another's. Allow me to put you on the train-your tickets, if you please. What? No parlor-car seat? Pray understand the luxuries of life are yours for the present."

He escorted her down the long plat-

form, putting her in charge of the conductor, and tipping the porter to look after her comfort.

"Your grandfather has adopted two nephews, William Douglas and Maxwell Scott, who live with him," he told her just before the train started. "They need only know you in your professional capacity. I advise you to repress undue politeness on the part of young men."

Miss Fitzgerald colored with resentment. "I don't know why you think it necessary to give me such a warning," she began—but he was half-way down the aisle of the car, and she had her

indignation to herself.

"I am a weak-minded idiot!" she exclaimed mentally. "I am doing what I disapprove simply because Doctor Harper says I must. I won't!" she added viciously, picking up her bag and umbrella and starting from her chair. To her amazement, however, it was her train that was moving, instead of the one across the platform, and she sank back in vexed resignation.

Her quick movement brought the porter to her side with obsequious offers of help. Had she a footstool? Had she lost anything? She longed to answer: "Yes, my independence," but she managed to regain her usual loftiness of manner while she accepted the footstool, and lectured herself into quiescence. It was useless to struggle against fate; she was committed by her own vacillation to this masquerading, and the only outcome now was to let her professional usefulness be its own excuse. By the time the train had passed the suburbs her mind had regained its repose, and fancy, stimulated by anticipation, gave back the past with vividness. She was going to her mother's old home-to that wonderful island that glowed in her imagination partly through her father's brush, partly through her mother's impassioned talk.

She had been born in Italy, but so completely had she absorbed her mother's sense of banishment, that as a child she pined for America, and home meant to her a fairy palace in a crystal lake. At last, when she was a girl of four-

teen, and her mother's encroaching illness had brought them into nearer companionship, she ventured one day

to demand the truth.

"Why do we not go to grandpapa, on his beautiful island, if he still lives there? I am sure you, would get well if only you were at home."

But she regretted her indiscretion when she saw her mother's rush of

tears.

"He is angry with me, Kathleen, for marrying your father. I humbled myself to him once, and it did no good. We Douglases are too proud to ask forgiveness twice."

That was six years ago, and Kathleen remembered the misery of the words as if they had been said yesterday. She died in her pride, poor lady, and left her daughter to struggle with condi-

tions daily growing worse.

It was not that Gerald Fitzgerald was unkind or dissipated; he was simply visionary and selfish. He was an Irishman of good family and much cultivation, with some skill as a musician and a trifle more as an artist, but

his talents were mediocre.

Mrs. Fitzgerald's fortune would have yielded a fair income, but they killed the golden goose and devoured it bones and beak, and at the time of her death Fitzgerald was once more thrown upon his brush for support. He sold the furniture of their apartment, turned his back upon Florence, and with the few pictures he had on hand, and his fifteen-year-old daughter, he sailed for New York, thinking the American picture-dealers would make his fortune for him.

Here they lived first in one boarding-house, then in another, avoiding the company as distasteful, and depending on each other for society, till finally, in Kathleen's nineteenth year, Mr. Fitzgerald succumbed to a cold and died of pneumonia. He had been playing his violin in an orchestra by way of augmenting his income, and the exposure had been too much for him; for the theater claimed him, no matter what the weather, and he was a delicate man.

Kathleen found herself alone and

penniless, except for two or three pictures and an excellent violin.

Her father's musical companions, who had known straits themselves, set on foot a raffle for the violin, which realized a sufficient sum to bury him, and the doctor, who had taken a fancy to Kathleen, advised her wisely about disposing of the pictures, and then sent her as a probationer to a hospital whose training-school is justly considered the best in New York. The girl proved herself intelligent and ambitious. She completed her course with credit, and at twenty-two-the age when most young women enter the school-took her first case outside the hospital. It was here she met Doctor Harper.

She had been on night duty for nearly a week, and was coming downstairs from the sick-room with a tray in her hand when she encountered the great man in the hall and stood aside to let him pass. There was not a nurse in the town who didn't regard Doctor Harper as the fountainhead of wisdom; and she looked at him with admiring awe. To her amazement, her furtive glance was met by a stare of

burning curiosity.

"What is your name?" he asked. "It is either Fitzgerald or you're a ghost!"

Too much astonished to take in the drift of his question, Kathleen seized upon the word "ghost" and wondered whether her appearance suggested unprofessional fatigue. She murmured that her name was Fitzgerald, but that she was really not as tired as she looked.

"It is not your fatigue that interests me," he said bruskly; "it is your mother looking out of your eyes. I knew her very well; in fact, I—I mean, I felt an interest in her. So you are Margaret Douglas' daughter! I didn't know she left a child, but you are her very image. Come to my office the first day you get an outing. I want to talk to you."

And that was the beginning of the friendship; a friendship of only three months' standing, but enriched by the memories of other days on the part of Doctor Harper, and by the gratitude of a lonely heart on the part of Kathleen.

She sat turning these things over in

her mind as the train rushed northward along the river's bank, and every turn of the wheels deepened her perplexities. She wondered whether her likeness to her mother would be as evident to her grandfather when he regained the use of his eyes as it had been

to Doctor Harper.

Toward sunset the chill of the woods began to creep into the stifling atmosphere of the car. The road now wound in and out among the hills, while glimpses of lakes and stretches of forests proclaimed the new character of the scenery. Kathleen realized that she was already in the enchanted country, and her heart beat fast every time a sheet of water came into view. At last the train came out of a valley, and ran for a short distance along the southwest shore of a large lake, shaped like a pea-pod.

The porter came to her chair. "If you're goin' to Mr. Douglas', miss, you can see the house now right up there in the middle of the lake; it is about three miles in a straight line, but we have got to get round the end of the lake and up the east shore to Limpid Station, and then it ain't much of a

sail across."

Kathleen looked at the distant mound of green and glistening white that swam in the midst of the lake, while the level sun touched the upper windows till they blazed like fire. The sight thrilled her with an emotion in excess of what she felt the occasion warranted.

"It is very beautiful," she managed

to answer.

"It is considered one of the sights of the woods," the porter continued. "They say the architecture is real Eyetalian," he added, with a negro's love

for phraseology.

Another ten minutes brought them to the little railway station, where stood the same buckboard that had met Doctor Harper the day before, only this time it was driven by a groom, and the front already so piled with express parcels that there was hardly room for Miss Fitzgerald's trunk.

The sunset lost its rosiness and grew green where it touched the invading

gray; the road through the woods smelt damp with mold, and when finally they reached the lake the girl was shaking with dread and depression.

The launch had hardly started on the home trip when a whistle blew sharply from the farm, and the engineer, with a smothered exclamation of impatience,

returned to the starting-point.

"It is young Mr. Douglas," he explained to Kathleen. "I fetched him over, but I thought he'd go back in the gardener's sailboat; it is mostly his plan when business takes him to the farm."

The man's manner of pronouncing the word "business" was manifestly impudent, though Miss Fitzgerald was

ignorant of its cause.

The haste of their return found no reflection in the movements of the young gentleman who had so arrogantly whistled them back. He came sauntering down to the wharf after a delay of ten minutes, and took his seat opposite to Kathleen with a casual apology.

"You are my uncle's trained nurse, I presume," he said, raising his hat. "I had not counted upon your train being so punctual, but we take things leisure-

ly on the island."

He was a romantic-looking person, dark and thin; not unlike Titian's "man with the glove" in feature, and the likeness was accentuated by his hair, which had a tendency to fringe his forehead instead of retaining its dividing line. The eyes were shallow in color and expression, and the mouth compressed and slightly cruel; yet, taken as a whole, the face expressed

breeding and refinement.

Kathleen's hat was shrouded by a thick brown veil, which had served during the journey as a screen from the dust, and she was not sorry that it had fallen over her face after fluttering for a second in the breeze; she had no desire to invite the inspection of any member of the family. At the time, however, William was not in the least interested in her appearance. She seemed to him a sort of upper servant, who had to be treated with a courtesy he was far from feeling, and whose

presence interfered with the poetic calm of the hour. The lake was opalescent except where the overshadowing mountains on the west turned it into glassy blackness, and the two passengers enjoyed the scene in si-

At last William addressed the engineer. "Put on more steam," he said.

"I am late as it is."

Kathleen looked at her watch, and then huddled it back into her dress-it had been her mother's, and it gave her a feeling of guilt. She ventured, however, to ask what time he made it.

"Ten minutes to eight," he said;

"and we dine at eight."

Her first thought was that she would hardly have time to wash off the dust of her journey, and then she remembered that the "we" of Mr. William Douglas' speech referred to her other cousin, Maxwell Scott, and she would probably have her meals in her bedroom, or any corner where her presence would give least offense. It seemed grimly funny to her that she. the daughter of her grandfather's only child, should be so completely ignored by this supercilious young man; and then all self-conscious ideas were lost in the excitement of arrival. were close enough to the island to take in every detail, and she found it beautiful. It was Venice, it was Maggiore, it was a villa on the Brenta! Memory brought one treasured recollection after another to add charm to the resemblance. She forgot she was a trained nurse, coming for twenty-five dollars a week to nurse a half-blind invalid; she forgot, her cousin's lofty indifference. She was a child once more, sailing with her father and mother on some Italian lake, and turning to find a reflection of her pleasure in their quick sympathy.

"How absolutely charming! I am not sure but that I prefer a recessed loggia to this projecting portico, but

it is classically perfect."

William stared his surprise. What had loggias and porticos to do with pills and bandages? What right had. a young woman working for her bread to pass judgment on the Douglas pos-

sessions? Above all, since she was so extremely handsome, how had she had the effrontery to keep her face concealed till now! He might have begun their acquaintance differently if he had seen her.

"You have been abroad with patients. I presume," he said patronizing-

"I have been for a long time in Italy," she answered, "and am possibly a little sentimental about anything that re-

calls those pleasant days."

She became suddenly interested in the shore they had just left, and turned her shoulder to him as a discouragement to further conversation. He. however, had found a congenial topic in the architectural perfections of the house he almost looked upon as his own, and the subject was not half exhausted when they reached the villa; but William, knowing himself late for dinner, only paused long enough in the hall to order some one sent to show Kathleen to her room before he disappeared up the staircase two steps at a time.

So this was her home-coming! Left standing alone in the hall while the footman went in search of the particular maid-servant whose business it was to show a trained nurse to her room.

A rosy-cheeked young woman presently appeared, and even condescended to carry Kathleen's bag and umbrella while she led the way to the floor above. They were passing round the upper gallery when a bedroom door opened just beside them, and a young gentleman in conventional evening dress came out, calling, "Good night!" to some one within.

"I wish you were able to come down to dinner, Uncle James," he said, paus-"William and I have grown so ing. bumptious without a proper amount of snubbing from you, that we have taken to contradicting each other. Awfully bad for digestion, you know.'

The manner denoted good fellow-

ship.

Kathleen could not hear the reply, but guessed that it ended in some urgent request about a dog, for the young gentleman whistled, and a halfgrown bull-pup, white as milk, came running down the corridor, and, bounding against the visitor, nearly knocked her flat.

Maxwell Scott rushed to the rescue, shouting: "Down, Lilly! Behave yourself, old girl!" till he caught up to Kathleen, when he dashed into a mixture of apology and welcome that was

rather bewildering.

"Perfectly harmless, I assure you. So glad you have come-lessens our responsibilities, you know-though I think he is better. I never knew a pup like Lilly; she follows my uncle's meals to his room like a harpy-so unfair to a man who can't see! You had a comfortable journey, I hope, and

are not very tired?"

His voice was boyishly sweet, his face charming from the sincerity of his gray eyes; his mouth looked humor-ous; his short nose suggested tenacity -a little of Lilly's disposition humanized. Kathleen thought, as they walked together down the passage. If she had been asked to name her cousin's age, she would have guessed him at least three years younger than he was, for the spirit of youth possessed him in its radiance like an emanation from the joyousness within.

His manner did much to soften her sense of loneliness, and when he left her at the door of her room, promising to send Nancy Boyle "to put her onto things," as he expressed it, it is not too much to say that she was prepared to give him his full share of

cousinly regard.

CHAPTER III.

The rooms prepared for Kathleen had been her mother's, and were situated at the end of the west wing. They consisted of a bedroom, with windows on the lake, and a sitting-room overlooking both lake and garden. furnishing had evidently been done to suit a young girl's taste, for the faded hangings had once been rose color, and the woodwork, carved and enameled, looked like old ivory.

Kathleen recognized her surroundings as she crossed the sill of the door. How often her mother had described the pretty boudoir! A wave of regret that forced tears to her eyes came over her as she realized that it was from this very room her mother had stolen away to join the man whose love became a tragedy. It seemed the irony of fate to give back to the daughter the familiar scenes for which the mother

longed.

Ashamed to be seen in tears, Kathleen walked into the bedroom to dry her eyes, while the housemaid set down her bag and umbrella. The young woman had gone when Kathleen returned, and in her place stood an elderly female, who the girl instantly guessed to be Nancy Boyle. She stood grim and forbidding, and her bow to the stranger was entirely lacking in welcome.

"I presume you are the trained nurse," she said. "I have put you on this side of the house to be near Mr. Douglas, as you will be obliged to take turns with me in nursing him. I am the housekeeper. The servants call me Miss Boyle, and the gentlemen of the family call me Nancy.

There was a truculent squaring of her shoulders, as if she challenged the newcomer to define her position.

"Then I shall call you Nancy," said the girl, so firmly that the old woman

gave a snort of surprise.

It required some courage, but the effect was instantaneous, for Nancy's next remark was a question and not an observation.

"Do you intend taking charge of Mr. Douglas to-night?" she asked, with the

jealousy of the superseded.

"Within an hour," said Kathleen. "I should like a bath and something to eat, and then you may consider yourself free till to-morrow morning.

Miss Boyle tossed her head. "If he doesn't very well," she said. object, it is not for me to say anything. You have only to put the lotion on his eyes and give him his medicine. His valet helps him undress and has a bed in the little room next."

Kathleen remembered that she had been told to use tact in her dealings with Nancy, and she thought she had asserted herself sufficiently; so she answered:

"It doesn't seem very difficult, does it? But you must try to save yourself a little—you have been taking care of him for three days and nights, and must

need a rest."

The old woman looked sharply at the girl, as if there were something in her voice that dimly disturbed her; but it was now so dark that they could only guess at each other's expression, and

Nancy said more gently:

"Ring that bell when you are ready for dinner, and at nine o'clock I'll come to take you to Mr. Douglas." Then, with a return of her rudeness, she added: "Can you light your own lights?"

"I can," Kathleen answered shortly, glad to be rid of her; and by dint of great expedition she got her bath, changed her costume, and ate her dinner within the hour she had reserved

for her refreshment.

The repast was a most sumptuous one, served from the young gentlemen's dinner, but long before its courses were exhausted Kathleen declined anything more, and sat waiting

impatiently for Nancy.

The candles were lit on the mantelpiece, while on the table, where she had dined, a lamp gave a more direct light. The effect of the room upon her tired senses was soothing, yet exasperating; it was like the ghost of her The brocade of the hangings blended harmoniously with the deep ivory of the woodwork; the low bookcases held a carefully selected collection of English classics and superannuated novels bound in vellum; the floor was covered with a Persian rug of marvelous sheen; but everything that would have given intimacy to the life once lived there had been taken away. Kathleen had hoped to be put in touch with her mother's girlhood, and instead it was only the form without the spirit. Her nervousness became so great that she could not sit still, and she began pacing the floor, when Nancy's knock put an end to her reflections. She determined to put her likeness to her mother to an immediate test, and stopped in her walk under the candles of the mantel-piece as she called to Nancy to come in.

In she came, with the same air of suppressed resentment, shutting the door behind her and beginning with a

sniff

"I hope the dinner gave satisfaction—" and then she gave a screech that made Kathleen regret her precipitancy, and flopped over into an armchair, with her face as white as paper.

"God bless us and save us!" she whimpered. "You have set me all of a-tremble. I feel as if the dead had come back." She held out her hands, as if to ward off something uncanny, while Kathleen crossed over to her chair and put her hand on her shoulder.

"Am I so like my mother, Nancy? Doctor Harper said you would know me, and I was to tell you everything

and ask your help.'

"Your mother!" she repeated. "You are Margaret's daughter! The saints preserve us! Does Mr. Douglas know?"

Quick steps came along the corridor, and, without knocking, the house-

maid entered.

"We thought we heard you scream, miss," she began, and then, catching sight of Nancy in the chair, she stopped short. "I didn't know you were here, Miss Boyle."

"I'll warrant you didn't," the house-keeper answered angrily, "or you would have knocked before you burst into a lady's room. If you were as quick to answer your bell as you are to gratify your curiosity, there would be better service in this house."

In spite of Kathleen's agitation, she could not but be amused at the rapidity with which Nancy's mood changed. She flung herself from tenderness to reproof with the agility of a tumbler. As the maid retreated, Kathleen sank on the arm of Nancy's chair.

"I don't think my grandfather knows," she said, in answer to the old

woman's last question, "or he would have sent me some message at the time of my mother's death, even if he did hate my father. You see, I was born in Florence after she had lived there several years, and the bad feeling be-

tween them was hot."

"Well, he shall know it now, as sure as my name's Nancy Boyle," said that redoubtable person. "There is them waiting for his money who may find their pockets empty, after all-and I sha'n't be sorry-naming no nameswhich it isn't Mr. Scott.

This somewhat involved sentence

gave Kathleen a fright.

"You are not to tell him," she said "Doctor Harper says any earnestly. sudden shock might be fatal; his heart is very weak. Let him get used to my presence, and when he sees my face he might notice the likeness as you did, only it will come to him more gradually. If he doesn't ask me the truth, I shall never tell him."

·"You'll never tell him?" exclaimed the old woman, in anger. "You'll let him go to his grave hungering for his own and leaving his money to outsiders! That's not sense, child!"

"He let my mother hunger for a kind "I believe word," the girl said sadly.

she died of homesickness.

"But he grieved for her," said Nancy. "There was some one in Rome who sent him word, and he was like a crazy man for weeks. It's those proud people who feel the worst when their deeds come home to them."

Kathleen started to her feet. "We are leaving him too long," she said. "We can talk to-morrow. See, it is half-past nine." She drew her mother's watch from her dress as she spoke, and held it out to Nancy. "Do you re-

member it?" she asked.

"Do I mind it!" said Nancy. "Do I mind Miss Margaret's watch that was hers and her mother's before her! Mr. Douglas gave it to her on her sixteenth birthday, and she danced round this room like a madcap, she was so pleased. Well, we must go to him now, dearie, and I'll leave you to sit up to-night, for I'm near spent with watching. You can doze in your chair, but when he calls 'Nancy,' then you must run like the wind, for he's apt to be sharp, and he ain't used to waiting. 'Twould be a bold woman who would make Mr. Douglas call twice.'

"Don't let us be bold." Kathleen answered, laughing. "He may have called twenty times while we have been talk-

Nancy jumped up in dismay, and rolled briskly toward the door; but there she stopped, while she whispered

shvlv:

"Would you kiss an old woman, and tell her your name?" and Kathleen threw herself upon Nancy's neck in whole-souled response, such as only the

lonely can feel.

The housemaid, who had been flitting about the corridor hoping for some news to carry down-stairs in regard to the scream, was electrified to see Miss Boyle come out of the boudoir and waddle majestically toward Mr. Douglas' room with her arm round the trained nurse. Nancy was not an expansive person to the servants, but in some way it had been guessed that the coming of this trained nurse was peculiarly unwelcome, and this rapid change from hostility to friendliness caused a distinct flutter in the servants' hall.

"Well, I declare," the housemaid concluded to the company belowstairs; "there is no suiting Miss Stew" -this was a subtle pleasantry on Boyle. "First she begrudges the new nurse a bed to lie in, and then she's as thick as molasses with her.

In the meanwhile Kathleen and her new friend had arrived at Mr. Douglas' door, to find him still sleeping, and, after Nancy had explained the usual arrangements for the night, she surrendered her office with cheerful alacrity.

The room was in darkness, but the windows were open and the soft breeze came in refreshingly from the lake. Kathleen had a catlike facility for finding her way about in the dark, and, creeping to the sofa, she knelt beside her grandfather and tried to guess the outline of his face. The starlight was

brilliant, but it was not bright enough to give her more than an impression of gauntness in the figure, and no idea of

the face.

The breathing was regular—perfectly normal, she thought-and she ventured to augur from this that, whatever the complications had been, he had surmounted them for the time, and that she was to minister to his convalescence. With a lighter heart she walked to the south window and looked out. To the left she could dimly see the portico and water stairs projecting boldly into the water, while to the right, bevond the lake, the mountains showed black against the sky. Directly below, the dining-room windows opened on the terrace, and the murmur of voices floated up through the stillness of the

"My cousins are still at dinner," she commented to herself; and as the thought crossed her mind William stepped out from the window and seated himself on the balustrade, while he scratched a match and lit his cigar. As the shielded flame glowed in the hollow of his hands, his features stood out clearly in the red light, and Kathleen acknowledged, with a feeling of irritation, the distinction of his good looks. She did not want to admire him; she had resented his casual manner in the boat, and chose to ascribe

it to excessive self-esteem.

Another figure emerged, and William's voice, clear but low, offered a

caution:

"Don't smoke cigarettes right under Uncle James' windows, Max. You know he hates the smell, and they are disgusting things, anyhow."

"In your opinion," corrected the other, as if he were tired of having the law laid down to him; and then added

more cheerfully:

"All right, give me a cigar, then. I've got something to tell you, now that we are alone; and, by the way, Billy, I have been trying all day to get hold of you—and last evening, too—where have you been?"

"You know perfectly well that I took Doctor Harper to the train last night," William answered; "and to-day I have

had other things to do."

Max laughed. "I didn't suppose the train business took up twenty-four hours," he said; but William had stood all the comment he found agreeable, and answered crossly:

"It is of no consequence where I was. Go on with what you have to tell

me."

Max seated himself beside his cousin on the balustrade, nursing one foot on his knee and leaning forward with a kind of boyish impressiveness.

"Well, it is rather into both of us," he said gravely; "but to my mind there is no question of what we ought to do. Uncle James' daughter, Mrs. Fitzgerald, left a child, who is living in New York, supporting herself in some way, and Uncle James doesn't know it. How does that strike you, Bill? Oughtn't

we to tell him?"

Kathleen had begun to move from the window, more from a sense of general fitness than from the fear of hearing anything private, but at these words she stood rooted to the spot; honorable or dishonorable, she had to know how much of her story was known to Maxwell Scott, and how these new-found cousins would be likely to treat her if her relationship to their uncle were disclosed here, under his roof. The idea evidently struck William in anything but an agreeable light.

"Who says so?" he asked, so sharply that his voice turned into a snarl.

"Can't you guess?" Maxwell answered. "It was Doctor Harper. He has seen the girl—in fact, he knows her well, and he says there is no doubt of the truth of his assertion. I cannot say that I asked him how he found it out, because we got switched off on another track, and we were only alone in that short drive from the station, but I should as soon think of doubting your word as his."

William's eyes said: "Fool!" though their expression was lost in the darkness; but his voice was frankly con-

temptuous as he answered:

"Doctor Harper has become credulous in his old age. The whole thing is

Mrs. Fitzgerald could not have had a child without Uncle James knowing of it, and even if she did conceal it from him, out of pique, Fitzgerald would have brought it to our attention after her death. He was an unscrupulous beggar, and would never have missed such a chance of wringing money out of his father-in-law. It is a put-up job, Max, and you're an ass."

Maxwell pitched the cigar he had begged from William into the lake-it had lost its flavor-while he answered.

with some temper:

"Granting that I'm an ass, I don't see how you can imagine that a man like Harper could be deceived."

William shrugged his shoulders. "The doctor is at a time of life when a clever woman-especially if she has a bust and a complexion-can twirl him round her finger," he said coarsely.

Max could not but remember Harper's phrase: "Fine lump of a girl," that had so disgusted him the day before, and for a second William's as-

tuteness impressed him.

"Things have got to such a state in this country," William went on, "that a fortune cannot pass even to direct heirs without being exploited by some adventuress. I knew something of the kind would turn up, but I hardly expected it to come through a family friend.'

"Come, Bill." Max said, recovering from his momentary waverings; "you know Harper isn't the man to be caught by fakes. I'm awfully sorry now that I didn't go into the question of proof with him. I can only tell you that what he said was so convincing to me that I'm going to act upon it.

William sprang from the balustrade and caught Max by the shoulder.

"Idiot!" he said. "You are not going to turn this woman loose upon Uncle James in his present condition? Do you want to kill him?"

Maxwell's admiration for William, which for years had stood above bloodheat, was sinking below the zero mark. The contempt was in his voice now.

"You needn't be in such a funk," he said. "I'm not going to spring surprises on Uncle James, or you, either: your money is safe enough, Bill. My plans for the future are in regard to myself alone."

"And, if one may be so bold as to in-

quire, the plans are—what?"
"Work," said Maxwell.

"Work," said Maxwell. "Spade?" said William.

"Not preferably," Max answered, in perfect temper. He had left the balustrade, also, and stood leaning his slim young figure against the side of the window. His hands were thrust deep in his trousers pockets, as if their emptiness were his inspiration. "I know I'm not particularly good at brain work," he went on. "I muffed my reading last winter till I couldn't pass my exams; but, all the same, I got something out of it, and I am practical. I fancy I could make a fairly good business man, and I am going to ask Uncle James to give me a small sum to start in with. Bob Read tried to get me to go in with him six months ago, and I was too lazy; but I think I'll do it now. He has had five years' training under the old man, and he has bought his seat in the Stock Exchange. I telegraphed to him to-day to hold on, I thought I'd come in."

"In other words," said William, "you fear the estate may be held up after Uncle James' death, and so you are going to make an out-and-out grab while he is still alive. Your business ability is better than I supposed. Good luck

to the firm, Maxwell!"

His manner was so offensive that

Max's temper gave way.

"You are the most cold-blooded devil I ever knew, William," he said bitterly. "I don't believe you care for a creature beyond yourself."

"And all because I do not welcome by anticipation an adventuress to do you and me out of our inheritance. It is sordid, I grant! In regard to Doctor Harper, let us agree that he is susceptible, rather than senile!"

'Good night," said Maxwell abruptly. A bat came swooping down between them, attracted by the light from the window, and William became so interested in its aimless circles that he forgot to return the salutation till after

Maxwell was gone.

"Of all the dangerous beasts that ramp the earth, commend me to the fool with a conscience," he said, addressing the bat.

CHAPTER IV.

If Kathleen were humiliated in her own eyes by her eavesdropping, she had at least acquired an insight into the situation, and a knowledge of her cousins' characters, which months of ordinary intercourse could not have given her. How could she make them believe that she didn't want their money? All she wanted was family affection; a place of refuge if she broke down under her work. It frightened her to think of the long stretch of lonely life that lay before her, with nothing but rugged health between her and want. If these young men should say to her: "We are willing to take you as a cousin, Kathleen, and if ever you are ill or tired come back to the island and let Nancy take care of you," that would have satisfied her. She would have let her grandfather go to his grave without revealing her identity to him if they would appeal to her kindness, but William had said such bitter things that her anger burst against him.

It is certainly disquieting to hear yourself called an adventuress, and your only friend an imbecile. William had succeeded in making an impression, even if it were a disagreeable one. She hated his taunting tones, his cleverness in turning Maxwell's plans into ridicule; and yet for the moment he occupied her thoughts far more than Maxwell, who seemed to her open-hearted and loyal, but a boy. She would bring William to punishment, she vowed, and that before she left the island.

At this point of her vindictive program a voice from the sofa called loudly for Nancy, and her resentment was forgotten in the excitement of this first interview with her grandfather.

"Nancy has gone to bed, Mr. Douglas," she said, calming herself with an effort. "I am the new nurse. You have slept beyond the hour for your medicine. Will you take it now?"

She lit the shaded night-lamp, slipped her arm under his head, and held the glass to his lips, and then, without a word, began her ministrations to his eyes. Her self-reliance and the sureness of her touch were agreeable after Nancy's well-meant fussiness, and his mood was unusually benign. He had waked up feeling refreshed and free from discomfort.

"Did the papers come over in the launch with you?" he asked. "They

ought to be in the library."

She went into the next room, where, on the great, carved table, half-a-dozen morning papers were laid with nice precision, each overlapping the other below the head-lines. It was this formality of detail in her grandfather's house-keeping that chilled her Bohemian heart.

She was returning to the bedroom when he called to her to ask the hour. "A quarter to ten," she answered, and apparently the few words were sig-

nificant, for he said, with interest:
"You are not an American. All
Americans say a quarter of—as if an
hour were an orange from which you
removed a slice. I find your voice
agreeable. Are you an English
woman?"

"I am an American," she answered, wondering whether the daughter of an Irishman, born in Florence, had a right to her mother's country, but anxious at all hazards to stop this premature catechism. "If my voice is not disagreeable to you, perhaps you might like me to read the papers."

He hesitated. "My nephew, Mr. William Douglas, usually reads aloud to me after dinner. I dare say he has been here and found me asleep; so silly in Nancy to let me sleep at this hour and then lie awake all night. Help me up, if you please. I'll sit in a chair near the door, and you can sit in the library and read. You ought to be able to make your voice carry without much effort."

"I shall have no difficulty," she said, assisting him to a chair where he was

protected from the light, and yet within

hearing distance.

His orders were given clearly. "Read the head-lines of the *Tribune*, the summary of news, the weather report, the deaths. Then cast your eye over the editorials and see whether there is anything worth while. Then take the *Sun* and read exhaustively till I tell you to stop. I like the money article read with special clearness."

She had been hard at her task for more than half-an-hour, and was beginning to flatter herself that she was giving satisfaction, when, in the middle of a letter from a correspondent with the Russian army at Mukden, he stopped

her.

"You are making a shocking mess of Manchurian names," he said. "Why don't you take the trouble to inform yourself?"

The incivility of his complaint struck her as so funny that she answered bold-

1v:

"Because it has concerned me more to learn the names of things that belong to my profession. They are a great deal harder than Chinese. Shall I go on?"

"Not with that," he said. "Go to the

money article."

She had not gone very far before he

broke in with a comment.

"What a slump!" he said. "Gad, what a lot of money was lost yester-day—and what an opportunity for the man with cash! I hope my brokers took advantage of it. If I had my life to live over again, I'd go into the army or navy or Wall Street. It requires about the same qualities—courage and savagery, digging at other people's vitals. Go on, if you please, Miss—I forgot to ask your name."

"Smith," the melodious voice sup-

plied.

"Humph!" he grunted. "It is not hard to remember—rather a good thing in—" he hesitated, searching for a more courteous word than "attendants."

"Servants and dogs," she said, so pleasantly that he almost let it pass, but she had gone rather far.

"Be kind enough not to put words

into my mouth, Miss Smith," he said

irritably.

"I beg your pardon," she said, in genuine contrition. "If I had been brought up in America, I should say I was sorry for having been fresh."

"Oh, no, you wouldn't!" he retorted. "American ladies do not use slang. Where were you brought up, if I may

ask?"

Her answer, "Italy," was given with a sigh, and echoed by a deeper one from him. It was a mutual tribute to the same lonely grave in the "land of the cypress and myrtle" that held what

had been so dear to both.

The clock struck eleven, and with its stroke came a knock at the bedroom door. Punctuality was the keynote of Mr. Douglas' administration, and at eleven to the second the old gentleman went to bed. Whatever rites belonged to the ceremony were known only to himself and his valet, and Kathleen found herself shut out by a locked door. The respite was agreeable, for her voice was tired under the prolonged strain of reading aloud, and her spirits were dashed by the snubs that followed on what she had fondly thought a promising beginning.

Left to herself, her first duty was to make the required report to Doctor Harper, although it could consist of little more than an assurance of Mr. Douglas' improvement and an account of her conquest of Nancy. Still, it was a pleasant task to write to the one friend who cared for her welfare.

She seated herself at the writingdesk and opened the portfolio with its massive cipher of "J. D." in silver. It seemed a daring liberty to take with her grandfather's property, but she felt bound to be within call, and did not like to go as far away as her own sittingroom. She was new enough to nursing to make her professional judgment constantly at war with her social instincts, and the fact that she was in her mother's old home made the adjustment more than usually difficult. While she was still thrilling with the pleasure of Nancy's recognition, and her first meeting with her grandfather, it was chilling to have to ask herself whether Miss Smith, the trained nurse, could with propriety use her employer's writingtable. And then she decided that such questions were too trivial to influence a man like her grandfather, and she

dipped her pen in the ink.

She had hardly completed her first sentence when Maxwell Scott came into the room, and, with a murmured "Good evening," threw himself into a chair. Doctor Harper's warning against establishing too pleasant relations with her cousins obtruded itself disagreeably. She would have been glad to fall into easy conversation with this adopted son of the house, who brought with him such an atmosphere of joyous good fellowship. She would have liked to confess to him that she had overheard his communication to William on the terrace: that she admired his moral courage: that Kathleen Fitzgerald had stolen a march upon them, and was here in their midst; and all this had to be suppressed under the manner best befitting a paid nurse.

She acknowledged Mr. Scott's greeting by an inclination of her head, and then went on with her letter. All the time she felt his eyes upon her face.

If the truth must be confessed, Maxwell had been startled as he came into the room to see a woman in his uncle's chair; for the trifling circumstance of a nurse's arrival had slipped his memory in the excitement of the after-dinner talk with William. Possibly also the closely veiled female he had rescued from Lilly's impassioned greeting had failed to interest him, except as a stranger to be courteously treated; but as he saw her now, seated in the carved oak chair, with her head bent over her letter, her grace and charm flashed upon him like a tableau. He felt impelled to make her look up; those black curved lashes against her cheek were alluring, but he wanted to see the eyeshe hoped they wouldn't disappoint him. If he spoke, she would have to look at

"I came to say good night to my uncle," he hazarded, as an explanation of his presence.

It was a failure, however, for though the pen stopped scratching and the face was turned for an instant in his direction, the eyes avoided his as she answered:

"Mr. Douglas is busy at present with his valet," and then continued her

writing.

"Forgive my interrupting you," Max persisted, "but I am very anxious to know your opinion of my uncle. Do you find him better or worse than Doctor Harper led you to suppose?"

"Better," she said shortly.

"Then, I gather he has made marked improvement in the twenty-four hours," he returned.

"That should be the inference," she answered, bending once more over her task.

He was growing vexed at this resolute declining of speech with him, and

said, with some impatience:

"That letter will not go till to-morrow morning-it has missed the night mail-so you might as well give me your attention for a few minutes and wait to finish it till I go into the next room. I want to know whether you find yourself comfortable in our bachelor housekeeping; whether the servants are attentive, and Nancy decently civil. She has a crusty temper, and may be jealous at your superseding her, but she is the right sort at heart, and I can soon set her straight if she makes your position trying. Will you tell me frankly if you are badgered by any of them? If I can do anything to help you, I shall be so glad."

At last the eyes met his squarely—violet eyes, with an expression of eager response in their soft depths; she flushed deliciously, and caught her breath as if to speak, and then the intention seemed to die under some restraining thought, and she said coldly:

"Thank you, you are most kind, but I shall have no trouble with Nancy—

she likes me."

"You astonish me!" he exclaimed, ignoring manners in the amazement of an accomplished miracle.

His demure companion smiled so broadly that the smile degenerated into a rippling laugh, and then, suddenly recovering her gravity, she once more took up her pen and began to write.

She seemed to possess a dual personality that was infinitely stimulating to curiosity; in her professional capacity she appeared about as sympathetic as an intelligent machine, but in their short conversation Max had surprised a flash of gratitude and a distinct sense of humor that gave the lie to her icy demeanor. He gave over trying to make her talk, and fell to studying her profile. His task commended every turn of her graceful head, every motion of her slim young figure as she stretched out her hand for an envelope and directed and stamped her letter. He wondered why all women didn't arrange their hair with the same enchanting simplicity and crown it with a tiny cap; he wondered whether she knew how handsome she was; he wondered whether all trained nurses were ladies; certainly this one bore the stamp of breeding, in endless ways-in her rich, low voice, her nicety of utterance, her attitudes, her beautiful hands, her little ears; and then he pulled himself up suddenly and wondered how he could go over her points as if she were a horse or a dog-as if he were describing Lilly! At last she had finished that infernal letter, and, by Jove! she was going to speak of her own accord; that was better-decidedly better.

"I hope," she said, "I have not exceeded my privilege in writing at Mr. Douglas' desk; but I wished to be within call, and my report to Doctor Harper had to be made. May I ask you to see that the letter is posted?" She held

it out to him.

He noticed that the handwriting was vaguely familiar; there was a trick in forming certain capital letters that reminded him of his uncle, and yet, when he looked more carefully, he saw there was no real likeness—hardly a suggestion.

The valet opened the bedroom door and said to Maxwell: "Mr. Douglas is ready to see you, sir," as if the nightly interview were a matter of course.

It flashed into Kathleen's mind that

perhaps her cousin would choose this time to make his request for money; that what happened to be uppermost in a heart as truthful as his would have to come out, and that a few well-directed questions from the astute old gentleman in the next room might even bring to light the secret of her own existence as a motive for this new departure. She must protect her patient from an excitement that would produce a restless night; also her own personal interests from her cousin's candor.

Fearing a spoken word might be overheard by her grandfather, she motioned Maxwell to her desk and wrote:

Please stay only five minutes, and speak of nothing that can agitate Mr. Douglas.

Max stared blankly for a moment, and then, with the sheepish look of a boy discovered in meditated mischief, he scribbled:

Have you second sight? How did you guess I have something awfully important to ask him?

She smiled enigmatically, as if such wisdom dwelt with nurses, and wrote:

Promise to wait till I tell you it is safe.

Once more the violet eyes were raised appealingly to his. They gave Maxwell what he afterward described to himself as an *all-overish* feeling.

"I promise," he said under his breath.

In spite of Doctor Harper, pleasant relations seemed already established between these cousins, and Kathleen's resentment against William was forgotten in her genuine liking for Max.

CHAPTER V.

A sunny June morning was turning the island garden into an Eden. The old sun-dial in the court between the wings of the villa shadowed the hour of nine. Along the walks Lilly and the kitchen cat played at prisoner's base, with short cuts to safety over beds of tulips and daffodils—April flowers which in the late spring of the north woods invade the "month of roses." Beyond the shelter of the court, formal

borders of box and blue juniper led to an artificial pool set in a sunken garden that framed it like a grassy passepartout, and in the center of the pool a fountain splashed its waters with rhythmic zest. To the east plantations stretched to the water's edge, and among them wandering paths led to a garden pavilion that, like a miniature temple, capped a knoll. An old-fashioned flower garden lay to the left, fringing the west border of the lake.

Kathleen came round the terrace from the front of the house, intent upon exploring the grounds, and paused on the last step through sheer embarrassment of choice, so many paths allured in all directions. For ten days she had denied herself fresh air and exercise in the ardor of her nursing, but now all danger of blindness was over, and very soon her patient was to be allowed the free use of his eyes, so she had left him for an hour with William while she came rambling into the gardens.

Lilly came wriggling up, with a broad smile on her undershot jaw and an almost human invitation to throw dignity to the winds and have some fun. Kathleen responded by making foolish ineffectual passes at her, and Lilly barked with puppy delight, and then they started off together toward the sunken garden, to the infinite disgust of the cat, who had a surfeit of petticoat company in the kitchen, and came abroad in search of novelty.

Passing round the fountain, they left the beaten paths and went by grassy alleys toward the north, and here Kathleen found herself confronted by a retaining wall of considerable height, that seemed to bar her progress. Its surface was cut in two by a cascade that flowed from a reservoir above, and, after reaching the lower level, ran in a ribbonlike stream through the grounds. Stone steps banked the waterfall on each side, and gave access to the heights above.

Kathleen began mounting the steps nearest to her, and had nearly reached the top when her eye was caught by the flutter of a pink skirt, and above the thud of the steam ram that supplied these marvels of stream and cascade she heard a voice trilling a waltz. Full and round and true each note fell—a wonder of flexibility.

Lilly seemed to resent the singing, for she growled and stood listening with the wrinkles in her furrowed forehead deeper than ever. Before Kathleen could realize her intention, she made a dash at the singer, whose waltz changed into a cry of alarm, and who now ran forward, grasping a Kodak, and begged Kathleen to call off her

dog.

The stranger was a well-developed young woman, tall and straight, with fine black eyes and a high complexion. Her nose was indefinite—possibly a little inclined to pudginess-and the mouth wide and coarse, but redeemed by handsome teeth. She was neatly dressed in a pink muslin frock, with fresh embroidered bands at the throat and wrists, and her shade hat was gay with a wreath of roses. She looked bold, resolute, and, on the whole, good-tempered, but she had a way of squaring her shoulders when she spoke, and of flashing her eyes, that betokened much self-assertion. Kathleen's delicate distinction was almost put out by so much high coloring.

"That dog belongs to Mr. Scott, doesn't it?" said the girl. "It is strange it does not recognize me, because I belong to the place, or, rather, to the farm; but I rarely come over to the island—it is so awkward for a young lady to come alone to a place where

there are only gentlemen."

She looked hard at Kathleen as she pronounced the words "young lady," as if she challenged her to prove her

title to such a designation.

"I am a trained nurse," Kathleen answered, "and, of course, I go where I am sent. I am very glad, however, my good fortune brought me to the island, for I think it is the most beautiful spot in the world."

"That's right," acquiesced the young lady, in the slang of the day. "It is beautiful, and we are immensely proud of it. My father is the overseer of the whole place, and Mr. William Douglas

leaves everything in his hands. Do you know Mr. William Douglas? He

is a great friend of mine."

"I have seen him in Mr. Douglas' room," Kathleen answered, "but only in the most casual way. I know noth-

ing about him."

"I suppose that is only natural," said the girl; "but it is of necessity different with me. Since the old gentleman has been ill—indeed, even before that—Mr. William Douglas has taken charge of the place, and has had a great deal of business with my father; nearly every day he comes to me for tea, and begs for a song. I have quite a remarkable voice, you know, and if I chose I could sing in opera."

"I noticed your singing was deli-

cious," Kathleen rejoined.

"Old Mr. Douglas paid for my musical education," she continued. "I have studied for three years in Paris, and I have just come home. I mean to stay here for the summer, and then I may go on the stage. I have not made up my mind yet."

"I should think, with such a fine voice, it would be your inevitable career," Kathleen answered, amused with her excessive option. "It seems a delightful way of carning one's bread."

lightful way of earning one's bread."
"Perhaps I shall not have to earn
it," was the reply, given with an intensely self-conscious smile. "By the
way," she added, "I forgot to ask your
name. Mine is Stella Fane."

"An ideal name for a prima donna," said Kathleen. "Mine is Smith."

She was careful not to mention her Christian name, lest Miss Fane might take advantage of it in her bounds toward intimacy.

Lilly had made a circuit of the reservoir, and now came whimpering back to Kathleen, as if to assure her there was nothing of interest to be seen.

"Good-by," said Kathleen. "I am exploring the island, and my time for exercise is short. This does not seem the most interesting part."

"Mr. William Douglas means to throw a colonnade across here next year—just a little back from the wall—and fill in the space with retenispora and Colorado spruce. Perhaps you do not care about gardening; but he and I love to try effects. We think it will add very much to this end of the place."

Kathleen was getting a little tired of Mr. William Douglas' name and intentions, and this time she not only said good-by with finality, but began descending the steps. She was not to escape so easily, however, for Miss Fane was hard upon her heels.

"Would you mind," she asked, "just sitting on one of the stone settles in the sunken garden while I take a Kodak of it? It adds to the effect of a picture if you get in something animate. I am photographing the place at different points to illustrate an article I am writing about it for one of the magazines."

The week just spent in her grandfather's company had given Kathleen unusual facilities for studying his character, and no trait was more marked than his proud reticence. He was a recluse by choice, and if he elected to make his surroundings beautiful, it was to gratify his own taste only. She knew enough of his story to guess that anything which recalled his name to the world he had renounced would excite his keenest resentment.

"How do you know," she said, "that it is agreeable to Mr. Douglas to have his privacy made public?"

Stella was so surprised that she forgot to be angry.

"How can it hurt him?" she exclaimed. "Most people like to have their country places admired. At any rate, he will probably be dead before it is published. I suppose you know he cannot live much longer. It was Mr. William Douglas' suggestion about the illustrations, and he lent me his Kodak. A splendid one it is, too! You must have very strange ideas to see any harm in such a simple thing."

"So strange that you could not possibly understand them," said Kathleen shortly, and then added: "I cannot

pose for you this morning."

She had the grace to be ashamed of her gratuitous resentment; she was aware that she must appear both priggish and intermeddling in the eyes of Miss Fane, and yet her irritation at William's bad taste, if not actual heartlessness, spurred her on to one more indiscretion.

"I wouldn't publish that article yet if I were you. Mr. Douglas is a great deal better, and may live a long time, and it would be awkward if it cost your

father his place.'

She didn't see the look of rage with which Stella received the speech, for she was already on her way to the house. The hour she had set apart for exercise was not half gone, but there was no pleasure in the sunshine since her temper had been ruffled by Miss Fane's tactless speeches; the gaiety of

the morning was dimmed.

Coming round the house, with the intention of going to her own room, she saw at the water stairs a rowboat, well equipped with fishing-rods and lines, in charge of a half-grown boy, who was making a great deal of unnecessary wash by letting it drift away and then backing water with jerks of his oars. The thought occurred to her that William was going fishing, and that she must hurry back to Mr. Douglas, when Max came out of the house in a costume that proclaimed his intentions. He wore a pair of trousers that bore the marks of sedgy fish-lines and an intimate acquaintance with bait, a battered straw hat turned down like a helmet at the back, and a flannel shirt, clean but faded to a blur of blue. Like many gray-eyed people, he had the advantage of looking fresh in whatever he chose to put on-an advantage due to cleanness of coloring and symmetry of outline rather than any knack of dressing—and, disreputable as he was, Kathleen thought she had never seen him more attractive.

"Just in time to go fishing," he said to her, pulling off his helmet and flour-ishing it toward the boat. "My uncle is busy discussing improvements on a new purchase with my cousin, and it is bound to keep them for an hour at least. They are grading," he added, in an awestruck tone. "If you have never owned a country place, you cannot

guess what that implies. It means literally covering the land with gold."

"As they are only doing it in imagination, perhaps it will not take them so long," Kathleen laughed; "and I might be needed before I had landed my first fish."

"Any one could see you are townbred," he answered, "or you would understand that to change the face of nature is the most exquisite excitement the landed proprietor knows. Hold the boat steady, Tommy. Now, Miss Smith!"

"Really, I couldn't," Kathleen protested, looking longingly at the boat.

"Yes, you can," Max answered. "I'll soon settle that," and he disappeared

before she could object.

It may be guessed that she and Maxwell were no longer on the formal terms she had tried to maintain the first night of her coming. He was always in the library; always ready to walk beside his uncle when the invalid, with his hand on Kathleen's arm, made a short tour of the rooms; ready to read aloud if Kathleen's voice grew tired; in short, ready to be anywhere in sight of her face and in sound of her voice. He was falling in love as swiftly and surely as any man of twentyfive can when thrown day after day in the company of a beautiful and baffling young woman. What was much stranger was that Mr. Douglas, who could not see her face, seemed to share his infatuation. As for Kathleen, she was too happy to analyze her feelings. She saw that her grandfather had grown so dependent upon her that he was restless whenever she left him; that his crustiness had changed to a courtesy that was more than kind; that Maxwell was the most chivalrous and delightful person she had ever been thrown with, and that she never could make up her mind to be the means of depriving him of his inheritance, un-less—— There are some things young women do not even put into thoughts, but a solution of the situation may have lurked unacknowledged.

In two minutes Max came back in

triumph.

"They are hard at it still," he said. "They are draining a swamp and chucking a hill into a hollow, and, moreover, Nancy is within call. So come just for a little row. I'll turn out Tommy and the worms, and take you round the island, and have you back in half-anhour-honest Indian!"

His eves were so entreating and her pleasures so few! She came down two steps, hesitated, and found herself seated in the stern before she knew she

had consented.

It was ten years since she had been in a rowboat, and then it was on Lugano, when, as a child of twelve, she and her father and mother had made a trip to the Italian lakes. That her thoughts were intent upon the present rather than the past might have shown her how dominant Maxwell's presence had become.

"We'll take the shady side first," Max said, heading for the west turn of the terrace, and then, to his chagrin, he discovered Lilly keeping pace with the boat and threatening to join them

by a plunge and a swim.

He was able to head her off by shouts, and they saw her making for the other side of the island, probably intending to lurk for them there.

No motion is more soothing than a well-rowed boat, if some one else does the rowing, and Kathleen soon found herself in temper with her surround-

They passed close to the flower garden, with its gay parterres almost touching the water's edge, and then under a balustrade on which was perched a little stone goblin so malicious and evil that Kathleen shrank away and Maxwell called her a "silly child," and they smiled into each other's eves and were absurdly happy.

And then Kathleen pulled out her precious watch and said there were but ten minutes left, and Max laughed and

rowed a trifle more slowly.

"I don't think Mr. Douglas should talk too long," she said. "It exhausts Though I must confess the interview he had with you yesterday did him no harm. He slept well, and seems to have been amused, for I saw him smiling over his thoughts half-a-dozen times.

Maxwell looked half quizzical, half

ashamed, as he answered:

"I am glad he thinks it amusing to hand over fifty thousand dollars to put me into business; it must be out of the generosity of the heart that the mouth smiles. Gracious! How I hated to ask him-I got hot all over. But he was so nice about it, dear old man! Instead of treating me like a beggar, he pretended to think I was showing a proper spirit and self-respect, and offered me twice as much as I asked for, provided he gets a good report from his bankers of my scheme. I'm to know on Thursday. He is the grandest man that ever lived!"

"Why do you want to go into business?" asked Kathleen, the words almost choking her with the fear that she was precipitating a confession of her

own identity.

It would have taken very little to induce her to tell the truth to her cousin Maxwell, but the time was not quite

"Because it is slavish to feel that another man owns you, no matter how much you like him," he answered; "and it is degrading to wait for dead men's shoes. I want my independence now."
"Mr. William Douglas seems very happy," she hazarded.

'Yes," Max agreed: "but he has resources within himself. He is a very cultivated man, artistically and practically, and he and my uncle are thoroughly in accord in all their tastes. I suppose, of course, this place will be left to him, and that is an occupation in itself. I have always felt, however, that we might not inherit without a lawsuit; the fact that he and I were adopted doesn't make us nearer of kin than half-a-dozen other people who may fancy a slice of his fortune."

Once more Kathleen's heart began thumping, and a half desire to confide in her cousin asserted itself, but she put it from her. She was keenly interested in Maxwell's point of view of his un-

cle's obligations to him.

"May I put an intimate question?" she asked shyly. "Would you mind telling me how you feel about taking this money to go into business? Does it interfere with your sense of independence?"

He looked sharply at her for a moment, to make sure she was not laughing at him; but, seeing her perfectly grave and sincere, he answered:

"Not a bit. In the first place, with the start I am likely to have, it ought to be possible to pay it off in a few years; and in the second, I know my uncle feels that a man owes his children a chance in life, and the chance should be commensurate both with his own means and with the way in which he has brought them up. Gratified as I am for the money, I am even more pleased with the way he understood my feelings and sympathized with them."

"I could have told you that," cried Kathleen, forgetting all reserve in her admiration of Max's honest simplicity. The first night I came he stopped me when I was reading aloud an account of some flurry in stocks, to declare that if he had his life to live over again he would be a fighter, if it were only in the stock market. Perhaps his own inaction has made him glad to see a more forth-putting spirit in you."

Maxwell's application of her words was very different to what she intended, but they happened to confirm secret hope he cherished that his uncle might also approve of another partnership he had vaguely formulated, whose

working capital was love.

"By Jove, how he has taken to you from the very first! He talks to you as openly as if you belonged to him. I can see that he hates to see you go out of the room—and what wonder!" he murmured. "I do myself."

Kathleen was alarmed at the personal turn her indiscretion had given to the conversation, and yet so lighthearted that it was hard to make her voice sound commonplace as she answered:

"I think you exaggerate his liking for me. I almost hope so, for I should be sorry to have him miss me too much when I go. Doctor Harper is coming on Friday, and he may decide that my presence is no longer necessary. I am absolutely sure he will let Mr. Douglas use his eyes."

She was well aware that unless she remained as a granddaughter, she had little excuse to stay. Mr. Douglas' recovery had been far more rapid than Doctor Harper had anticipated; but whether his heart would bear the strain of the announcement she had to make, was not for her to determine.

Maxwell was regarding her with

helpless despair.

"You know very well we cannot get on without you," he said miserably. "Everything would go wrong the very moment you left. Not but what I should like you to be in New York by the first of July, in case I am there myself. You would let me come to see you every day—" But what program for continuing their intimacy he was about to lay down, she was not destined to know, for a voice from the shore above them cried:

"Please, Mr. Scott, call off your dog! It has got me treed, or, rather, pavilioned, on this knoll, and won't let me move. I might have been here all day if you had not happened by."

In the very center of the little pavilion Miss Fane stood mounted on a table, still hugging her Kodak, while below her Lilly crouched, resenting every rustle of her petticoats with a growl. Perhaps the Kodak was the cause of the trouble—it may have represented an infernal machine to dog intelligence; certainly her dislike to Miss Fane was pronounced.

With a vexed "Pshaw!" under his breath, Maxwell sprang ashore at the landing under the knoll and dashed up

to the rescue of the lady.

In a second, to Kathleen's amusement, and, perhaps, also to her secret dismay, he returned accompanied by that redoubtable person, who said she was afraid to be left alone on the island with Lilly, and that Mr. Scott must take one or the other with him in the boat. His choice would have fallen upon the dog had she not seen fit to

plunge into the water that very moment after å turtle, and he was forced to accept Miss Fane as the dryer, if

less agreeable, alternative.

If chatter is entertainment, they were amply entertained by Stella during their short row home, and Maxwell's evident crossness and Kathleen's silence offered no damper to her spirits. She was delighted to have the servants see her in Mr. Scott's company, and smiled most coquettishly at him when he helped her out of the boat at the portico.

CHAPTER VI.

"You've come at last," said a voice from the semi-darkness. The tone was half reproachful, half in play, and Kathleen, ashamed at having stayed away so long, said contritely:

"Have you needed me, Mr. Doug-

las?"

"I have wanted you," he answered, "which is quite a different thing, and is apart from one's needs. You will think me very exacting to begrudge you an hour of sunshine when I have kept you immured in my depressing twilight for ten days."

"But I have played truant for more that my hour," she confessed. "Have

you had your milk?"

"They gave it to me," he said fretfully, "but I couldn't drink it: there

was cream on top."

She brought him the milk properly shaken, and gave it into his hands. He could see to feed himself, for his eyes were now only protected by a shade, and while it limited his range of vision, it restored him to some independence.

"I've been exploring your beautiful island," Kathleen said, standing beside him while he drank; and then she sketched the incidents of the morning, for she knew that even trivial things serve to break the monotony of an invalid's ideas.

The subject was congenial; he said

eagerly:

"I love the place. I have been a voluntary exile here for nearly fifty years, and the care of it has kept me from going mad. A man may safely bury himself in the past if he holds to one strong interest in the present, and it has been my pride to keep this place abreast of every modern' improvement. It would have been the crowning sorrow of blindness never to see it again. It seems to me part of my very self."

The speech threw a side-light on his strange attitude toward his nephews. He gave them the fullest measure of sympathy and friendship, which, nevertheless, fell short of intimate affection. It seemed to Kathleen that he still lived exclusively for the love of his youth, and though death had robbed. him of the priceless jewel, the empty casket-this island and its palace-was dearer to him than the human interests with which he had tried to reconstruct his life. What still remained an enigma was his treatment of her mother, but she was content to reserve judgment, and hastened to throw herself into his present mood.

"You will probably be looking out on your lake and gardens the day after to-morrow," she said gaily. "Doctor Harper is coming, and with colored glasses to protect your eyes, I fancy he will let you do what you like—all except reading. For the present you must accept that from others."

"It is the last service I wish to take from you," he answered passionately. "Your voice is so like the voice of some one who is gone that I could fancy her here beside me; when you speak the past is given back to me, when you read I wait breathlessly for the well-known cadence. Sometimes I have asked you questions you must have thought strange, hoping you would answer them in the words she would have used."

"And do I?" Kathleen asked, trem-

bling with excitement.

"Not often," he answered. "It is the privilege of each generation to clothe its thoughts in some new dress of words that stamps it like a fashion. I must not ask too much at the hands of chance."

He seemed lost in thought, and then

said impulsively:

"Will you go into the next room and get Mrs. Browning's 'Sonnets From the Portuguese'? They are on the second shelf, to the right of the window, the

fifth book from that end."

The minuteness of the directions betokened the intimacy of much study. Kathleen knew little of her grandfather's story, but she guessed that her reading was to strike, by the verisimilitude of voice, some chord that had ceased to vibrate; to cheat his fancy with an illusion more potent than he could summon for himself.

She found the book, and, returning to the darker room, seated herself close to the window, where she turned the blinds just enough to make a subdued light on the pages, and then awaited

his orders.

"Read," he said, "the sonnet that begins

> "I think of thee-my thoughts Do twine and bud."

She caught something of his exaltation even as she turned the leaves, and so read better than she knew the exquisite lines—the three last with a comprehension of his unfading love that almost seemed inspired.

Because in this deep joy to see and hear thee

And breathe within thy shadow a new air. I do not think of thee—I am too near thee,

Had her voice done this for him, she asked herself in the silence that followed; had she been able to "renew the presence" that he languished for in a manner "better and dearer" than thought?

She sat quite still, expecting to be asked for another, but that one glimpse into the holy of holies where he *arked* his love was all she was to know; the wings of impenetrable reserve swept over it once more.

He sank back in his chair.

"Leave me for a little while," he said.

Kathleen went noiselessly from the room, fearing the least rustle of her skirts might break the spell.

In the library, where the thick rug muffled sound, she moved more freely. First she restored the precious volume to its niche, and then she crossed to the writing-table, meaning to begin a letter, when her eye was attracted by a paper on the floor, lying with the written side uppermost, half under her chair. A housewifely instinct made her stoop to pick it up, but she quickly changed her mind and left it where it lay, for, unintentionally, she had seen two words—the first and last. "Dearest" was the beginning, and the signature was "Stella."

Undoubtedly William had sat down at the same table to arrange his papers after leaving Mr. Douglas, and had dropped this note. Kathleen was in a quandary. If she left the letter, it must soon be found by a servant and become the gossip of the house; if she handed it to William, it was a confession that she knew it was for him—that only he could be "Dearest" to Stella

Fane.

She went back to the window to be out of the neighborhood of the note, just as she would have stepped from the garden-path to avoid a basking snake, and stood turning the situation over in her mind. She was distressed to have become cognizant of the degree of William's intimacy with Miss Fane, and her dislike to him was intensified. She had no question in her own mind that the girl's game was matrimony, and that she believed her good looks and talent sufficient to make her admirer forget the humbleness of her birth: but that William shared such intentions was obviously absurd. And vet such things had been; gentlemen had married their cooks, and usually the cooks had the worst of the bargain!

She pictured her grandfather's rage if he could guess that the daughter of his overseer was only waiting for his death to establish herself in his house as Mrs. Douglas. Since her talk with him, a few minutes before, the place had acquired a new sentiment in Kathleen's estimation; she almost reverenced it. It was like the Taj Mahal at Agra—the expression of a strong heart's worship.

Her thoughts had wandered far from

the letter under the chair, but they were speedily recalled to it, for William came into the room, and, pausing for a moment at the writing-table, he furtively picked up the paper and joined

Kathleen at the window.

Fearing their voices might disturb Mr. Douglas, she stepped from the open window to the balcony above the portico, and motioned to him to follow her. His expression was worried, not to say cross, as he came out into the sunlight, and the hand that thrust the recovered letter into his pocket did so with a vicious twist.

The truth was, Stella was becoming too daring; she had sent him that note by one of the servants while he was busy with Mr. Douglas, and though he had obeyed her summons to meet her in the garden, they had had a stormy

interview.

He was anxious now to gather from Kathleen's manner whether she had seen the letter; for his knowledge of her sex led him to suppose that to see was to read. His experience had been chiefly with women of Stella's stamp—and worse—for, like many a cultivated man, he demanded the rare in art and

the common in love.

Kathleen was amused at the adroitness with which he tracked her employment of every moment since she returned from her outing. He began by asking whether she had enjoyed her row, pretending he had seen her from the window, though she shrewdly suspected that Stella had told him; and then he asked whether Mr. Douglas had been fatigued by their long business talk, and whether she had read aloud to him, and how long he had been asleep. It was not until she declared plainly that she had but just come into the library a minute before he had, that his brow cleared-the chances were against her having seen the letter!

After that his good nature came back with a rush, and even took on an air of playful gallantry. He begged her not to bestow all her leisure upon his cousin, and offered her his company in the launch that very afternoon, and when she declined on the ground that

she had already had her recreation for the day, he tried to make her promise for the next day but one.

"Doctor Harper is coming then," she answered, glad of so plausible an excuse. "It would be a breach of etiquette for a nurse to be absent."

"I see," he answered, "that you enhance the value of your society by making, it almost unattainable; but I shall try again. I am vain enough to suppose your objection is not to my society, though you do make it a point of vanishing from my uncle's room by one door when I come in by the other."

His manner was bantering; he never for an instant supposed he was stating a

simple fact.

"We nurses are trained to leave a patient with his immediate family whenever it is possible to do so," she said

primly.

"Do you consider my cousin outside the immediate family because his name is Scott instead of Douglas?" he asked, with a teasing laugh. "Ah, Miss Smith, I fear, after all, it is your inclination that discriminates, and not your training. But let us make a new beginning and be better friends."

He held out his hand, and she reluctantly put the tips of her fingers into it. To her astonishment, he bent and kissed them, and took himself off with an exaggerated bow of affected devo-

tion.

She had been brought up in the land where to kiss a lady's hand was the ordinary expression of respectful homage; but she had lived long enough in America to appreciate the different significance attached to it here, and, coming as it did from a man who considered himself above her in position, it made her furiously angry. She felt she was being treated as another Stella Fane, and tears of rage sprang to her eyes.

There is nothing that so quickly reduces exaggerated judgment to its proper proportions as the ordinary round of duty, and by the time Kathleen had given Mr. Douglas his medicine and sat with him through his luncheon she was disposed to view William's conduct more leniently. She

could never like him, but she considered him guilty of bad taste rather than insolence, and so gradually she was able to dismiss him from her mind.

Maxwell was gone all day, and the hours hung heavily. Toward evening she took Mr. Douglas for his accustomed exercise along the corridors and through the rooms, and when he innocently remarked that he missed his other prop-meaning Max-she echoed the sentiment with a sigh. Every day the walk was a little extended, and today they took in the east wing, where her two cousins were lodged. Looking through the open doors of their bedrooms, she felt sure she had rightly guessed the ownership of each: William's was luxurious to effiminancy, and Maxwell's like a schoolboy's, littered with all sorts of implements of sportfishing-rods and guns and foils and masks and snow-shoes-and against the walls a collection of sabers mixed absurdly with coaching prints. If there could have been any doubt as to the possessor, it was set at rest by Lilly's round head, which suddenly protruded from among the cushions of his sofa, where she had obliterated the time of his absence by an afternoon nap. Dogs are not without their advantages over humans!

Returning, they followed the gallery round the great hall, and then began pacing the corridor of the west wing, which led to Kathleen's boudoir; the room had become quite a favorite with Mr. Douglas, and Kathleen always invited him in to rest, because he declared, with a kind of grim humor, that when a man's vision was limited to what lay below him a variety in carpets was not to be despised. As his feet touched the thick pink rug, he stopped and ruffled its silky surface with his slipper.

"How these Eastern carpets keep their colors!" he remarked. "This was put here thirty years ago—long before you were born, young lady—to please a little girl who cared for pretty things, and whom I cared to humor in her fancies. These rooms were refurnished for her on her sixteenth birthday, and

in her delight she swore she would never leave the island—or me. In just three years she was gone, and of her own free will, and I never saw her again." He broke off with a sigh.

Kathleen led him to a chair, and ven-

tured to say:
"You mean that she married?"

"Ah, yes," he said; "but it can hardly interest a stranger. I am becoming garrulous in my old age. Ever since you have been here, I have lived in the past; partly, I suppose, because I am cut off from my usual occupations, and partly because the companionship of a lady like yourself must provoke memories. I have been drawn to you till I have sometimes forgotten the reticence due to myself and others."

Kathleen steadied her voice with dif-

ficulty.

"And I am drawn to you," she answered, "so that I rebel against the wretched restrictions of paid service that make me afraid of seeming presuming whenever I venture to speak to you as a friend."

"I am grateful to you," he said warmly, "and I accept your friendship. Whoever you may be, my child, it is plain to see you have been brought up

by gentle people."

"I mean to tell you who I am some time," she replied, wrestling with the temptation to tell him then and there. "Since you have promised to be my friend, I should like you to know all about me; but not to-day—the story

will keep."

She walked to the window to subdue her own emotions, and to leave him unmolested while he reveled in his cherished past. He was a pathetic figure lying back in his chair, his head resting wearily against the cushions, and a fine, nervous old hand impatiently tapping the top of a little table by his side. His strength and his spirit were ever at war. Across the lassitude of age and ill health he flung the invigorating memories of his youth.

Almost touching his restless fingers on the work-table lay Kathleen's watch, with the cipher of "Bella" in diamonds—her grandmother's name. It

was half hidden by some embroidery that overhung her work-box, and for once her quick glance had failed to take in the danger to her secret; but even if she had known, she might have felt no concern. Her grandfather's eyes were looking down the vista of past years, not prying into details so close at hand.

Outside, the level sun was touching the gardens with his dying glory; it caught the marble roof of the pergola and burnished it like gold; it made the trees throw giant shadows over the smooth lawns, and, falling on the fountain's spray, it turned the drops to Kathleen stood enchanted by the loveliness of the scene until she forgot it in something more delectable, for, crossing the flower garden from the lake, came Maxwell, with his little companion, fresh from a day of sport. Max carried the rods and Tommy the string of fish, and then they separated, the boy going to the kitchen with his spoils, and Maxwell, first stopping to pick a rose, sauntering toward the house.

He was not afraid of the sound of his own voice, or else the rose was very inspiring, for he sang, in a good, manly tenor:

Oh, my luve's like a red, red rose That's newly sprung in June! Oh, my luve's like the melodie That's sweetly played in tune.

As he reached the terrace steps, he saw Kathleen standing at her window, and his song ceased.

"See what I've brought you!" he cried, holding up his rose. "May I toss

it to you?"

She caught the thorny offering and smiled her thanks, and when Max had disappeared she laid her cheek against it and was as silly as many another girl in love when they know their elders cannot see.

Her rosy raptures might have continued indefinitely had she not been roused by a crash in the room that quickly brought her back to earth,

Maxwell's song had reached other ears than hers; Mr. Douglas heard it, and it recalled his wandering fancy to things present; notably to the fact that he had trespassed long enough upon his nurse's hospitality; so, wishing to return to the library, he called her name. first in a low tone, and then more loudly. He met with no response, however, for he had chosen the moment when she was leaning far out of the window, intent upon catching Maxwell's rose. The old gentleman waited for a moment, and then, with a mischievous desire to steal a march upon her, he tried to help himself, but his chair was low and his joints stiff, and the hand on the table instinctively closed on its edge, with the result that it toppled over in the crash already referred to, precipitating a mêlée of books, needlework, and, alas! the betraying watch, on the carpet at his feet. As Kathleen rushed to the spot, she realized her secret was no longer hers to guard.

Mr. Douglas was on his feet, but swaying feebly, while with one hand he grasped the back of his chair and with the other pointed to the watch. There it lay, directly under his eyes, the sun flashing on the diamonds in the well-known monogram, and the curiously linked chain so disposed that the ruby in the clasp stood mounted on

a pile of white linen.

Kathleen tried to make him resume his seat, but he resisted almost with

temper, while he demanded:

"How did you come by that watch?"
"It belonged to my mother," she answered, meeting the crisis with plain truth. "She was your daughter, Margaret Fitzgerald. Can't you forgive her after all these years? She loved you to the last."

At her words he tore the shade from his forehead and stood gazing at her with a face livid from emotion.

Knowing the weak condition of his heart, Kathleen was terrified; at any cost he had to be rescued from the strain of standing, so, taking him by the arm, she braved his resentment and with gentle force replaced him in his chair.

"For the sake of your health, try to calm yourself," she entreated. "It is all so simple—why should you be so agitated? Let everything stay as it was—you need never acknowledge me if it reopens old griefs. I ask for nothing but your love, and I think you gave me that before you knew I had a claim upon it. Believe me, I am not self-seeking. I came here because Doctor Harper thought I could be a comfort to you. He has known for three months that I am your granddaughter."

She doubted whether he even heard her, for, with his eyes still on her face,

he said

"Margaret! There's no need to tell me you are Margaret's daughter—you are almost her very self—but I hope to God you've got a better heart!"

"Her heart was true to you," said

Kathleen gravely.

"To me?" he echoed angrily. "What do I care whether she was true to me? I tell you she attacked her mother's memory, and as long as my breath lasts I shall—"

Kathleen laid her hand on his lips, "Oh, don't!" she said passionately. "You are killing yourself, and saying cruel things of my dead. She was all love and tenderness—you have misunderstood her—but perhaps she knows the truth now, and her poor heart is at rest."

"Bella's voice!" he whispered to himself. "She would have said that—she would have spoken just so." Then looking once more at Kathleen, he asked: "Did your mother call you Isa-

bella?"

She shook her head.

"It is one of my names," she answered; "but they called me Kathleen."

"Irish!" he said, with an accent of disgust, "A Fitzgerald name, I suppose. But what else could I expect? He always ruled her. I—I—— Help me to the sofa. I feel ill."

He sank down, looking more dead than alive. Kathleen, who had been prepared by the doctor for such attacks, ran for restoratives, and was surprised to find how quickly he responded. She did not wish to call assistance, because she feared it might force an explanation before her grandfather was prepared to acknowledge her, and she hung over his sofa, first with torturing anxiety, and then with heartfelt relief, as she saw the color come back to his lips and

felt his pulse strengthening.

His excitement seemed to pass with the temporary weakness, for when he spoke again his voice was calm, and his manner temperate and kind. He assured Kathleen that he felt entirely recovered, and, while he yielded to her entreaties that he should lie still for half-an-hour, he insisted that she should sit by him and give him every detail of her life in Italy before her mother's death, and her subsequent experiences in New York up to the time she met Doctor Harper. From the few confidences he made on his side, Kathleen gathered that the final rupture with her mother had taken place the year previous to her birth; that her mother, in a fit of homesickness, had written from Florence, offering to return to America if she and her husband would be welcome at the island, and that Mr. Douglas had urged her to visit him, but declined to receive Mr. Fitzgerald. Mrs. Fitzgerald, who was still madly in love with her husband, had retaliated by flinging his own story in his His answer was a check for a hundred thousand dollars enclosed in a letter desiring her never to address him again, and she, with equal spirit, returned the money, and never wrote him another line.

Kathleen could not but feel that the story threw a favorable light upon the character of her poor, shiftless father, whose dignity had never permitted him, through all their embarrassments, to apply to his rich father-in-law for help.

The sunset had faded to twilight before Mr. Douglas returned to the library, and his mood was as gentle as a dove. Leaning on Kathleen's arm, he

murmured:

"If I have wounded your feelings, my dearest child, you must forgive me; but even you will acknowledge that your mother's pride was too great when she went to her grave without letting me know she had a child. I may have been unjust, but she was unforgiving.

However, regrets are useless now—I shall not talk any more, and you may give me another dose of that unpleasant medicine to quiet me; for I must keep this old heart going until I have righted your wrongs."

CHAPTER VII.

The evening after Mr. Douglas made his momentous discovery, Nancy bustled into Kathleen's boudoir hard on the heels of her dinner. Her costume of rich black silk—the kind that stands alone—was more suited to December than to a warm June night, but Nancy had the soul of a woman, and when occasion demands a grande toilette, what true woman would let a trifle like personal discomfort weigh against a best dress? As an offset to the sober tint of the frock, Nancy's cap blushed with pink ribbons.

Kathleen threw down her fork and wheeled her chair half round in astonishment at her old friend's finery.

"How gorgeous you are!" she exclaimed. "Are the servants giving a ball to-night, or are you entertaining your own especial cronies at supper?"

Nancy was determined that no detail of her toilet should be lost; she turned slowly, that Kathleen might mark its modishness, and then moved on to the long mirror to indulge her own eyes with a full-length view, as

she answered slowly:

"A wedding down at the railway station. Old Fane's son, Jimmie, is marrying the postmaster's daughter. She's a dressmaker, and a right smart girl. It was her who altered this dress for me, and a good job she made of it, too! Where do you think I got it from, dearie?" she asked, turning her eyes reluctantly from her image in the glass to Kathleen's face. "It was your grandmother's, Miss Kathleen. Forty-six years it has hung in my closet, pinned in a sheet, just because I wouldn't cut it to pieces to suit the fashions, and now. I declare, the fashions have come round to suit the dress-sleeves and all. The only thing that didn't suit was the size of my waist;" and she laughed in her fat, chuckling way.

"Is it Stella Fane's brother who is going to be married?" Kathleen asked; and Nancy answered, with a sniff:

"That's the lad—only he ain't like the rest of them. By what I hear, they would have liked him to look higher—plain folks don't suit Stella; but I can tell her that if she ain't more careful, she won't have a good name to bring any husband. Jimmie ain't no fool. He's picked out a good smart girl, who'll keep his house tidy and work at her trade to help along. But I must be off—the wedding is in an hour, and it's a long way to go to the station. Still, it is a fine night, and I guess the trip is about the best part of it."

"Shall you dance, Nancy?" asked

Kathleen demurely.

"What else should I be going for?" responded the old woman, with her Irish sense of humor. "'Deed and I'm as young as another when a jig is afoot."

"You'll trip with light fantastic

toe!" laughed Kathleen.

"It's a light heart I'm carrying at present, Miss Kathleen—since you and Mr. Douglas are known to each other, I could dance all the time; but I'd be easier if the secret was told the young gentlemen."

"They shall be told to-morrow, when Doctor Harper comes," Kathleen answered. "I shrink from the responsibility of any more excitement without a doctor in the house. These fainting fits are alarming."

"Then why don't you tell them your-

self?" asked Nancy.

Kathleen colored. "Mr. William Douglas would not believe me," she said; "and as for Mr. Scott—ah, yes, perhaps I may tell him, but he has been away all day, and several gentlemen are dining with my cousins this evening—some surveyors, I think. Good night, Nancy. Don't dance too hard."

It was true that this had been a dies non in love's calendar. Maxwell had been carried off by William to give his advice about grading a new purchase of farm lands, and had returned so late that he had only time to spend five minutes in the library before he dashed off to get ready for dinner; and Kathleen was not sorry to keep Mr. Douglas more than usually quiet. He showed no ill effects of the shock of the previous day, but she knew the least agitation was to be avoided, and, indeed, Mr. Douglas was so anxious, on his part, to keep well enough to carry out certain intentions in regard to her, that he was ready to follow any suggestion of prudence, even to the length of going to bed at ten o'clock. Consequently, while Nancy was dancing at the wedding. Kathleen found herself free from duty an hour earlier than usual, and set about enjoying it with a degree of self-indulgence quite foreign to her

There is no extravagance so deliciously reckless as the busy woman's waste of time. A man of affairs takes his leisure as a matter of course—it belongs to his scheme of life; but the intelligent woman-with-an-occupation has also the inherited instinct to fill in every idle moment with pursuits historically feminine; in other words, she seeks to justify her new position as a wageearner by superadding the burdens of "These ought ye to have her sex. done, and not to leave the others undone!" cries conscience to the willing slave, who turns on a little more nerve power and is prostrated. Fortunately, she is subject to lapses from this double grind — lapses infinitely refreshing, though she may regard them in the light of a moral debauch.

Kathleen was enjoying just such a lapse in her boudoir with a novel and a glass of lemonade. No element of revelry was lacking—the strong excitement of the story, the daring character of a lemonade with a straw, the knowledge that she was stealing hours that should be spent in sleep, and lastly, the coquetry of a lace-befrilled dressinggown in place of her starched uniform. It was dissipation of the most devilish kind—and the sense of guilt the best part of it!

Upon these golden moments rang in the hour of twelve; the great hall clock led off, and every chimneypiece gossip in the house took up the tale, as if exulting in the death of another day. Kathleen heard and ignored; and then she heard something she could not ignore-a sharper, more persistent bell, that buzzed and whirred into her consciousness, and ceased only to begin Alas! who doesn't know the sound, the most intrusive, impudent, vulgar, and yet indispensable barbarity of our miscalled civilization? It took her a moment to realize that at that hour it was the business of any one who heard to answer; and then she tossed aside her book and flew down a staircase in her wing of the house. which landed her at the door of the pantry, where the telephone was situated.

Quick as she was, some one had been quicker, for, as she entered, a man's figure crossed to the instrument, and Maxwell's voice gave the inevitable "Hello!"

The lights were still burning in the passageways, for some of the upper servants had gone to the wedding, and the house was not shut up for the night.

Kathleen heard her cousin's pleasant tone change to one of alarm, and then she heard him ask:

"Is she much hurt?"

Running to his side, she laid her hand on his arm.

"I am here, Mr. Scott," she said. "Is there anything I can do? What has happened?"

"Nancy has had a fall and dislocated her shoulder. She is suffering very much and is crying for you, and Bond thought perhaps you would go to her. It is a great deal to ask at this hour of the night, and yet, if you can do anything to relieve her till Doctor Harper gets here in the morning, I know you will go gladly."

"To be sure I'll go!" Kathleen responded. "I'll be ready in five minutes—if you can find any one to take me across the lake."

They were standing now at the foot of the staircase, Kathleen already on the first step, Maxwell leaning on the railing. "I wonder, now, who will row you across the lake!" he said, looking at her with a loving mockery that made her senses thrill with delicious excitement

as she ran up-stairs.

In her room she hardly glanced at the remains of her revel; the lemonade seemed mawkish, and as for the novel —how other people's love-stories pale in the fierce glare of one's own pas-

sion!

She was more than five minutes getting ready, for, in addition to putting on her uniform and getting a cloak to protect her from the night air, she had to rouse a sleepy maid to help her find comfortable clothing for Nancy, and cotton-wool to swathe her shoulder, and so by the time she reached the water stairs Max was already there in a canoe—a frail shell of a boat, so evidently built for one that she hesitated to add even the burden of her weight.

"Step directly in the middle," he said, helping her in, and, with a sweep of his paddle, they were free from the stairs and alone in a world of romance.

Kathleen sank back among her cush-

ions in vast content.

"What a night!" she exclaimed. "I

could fancy myself in Venice."

"Impossible!" Maxwell laughed, "Venice with a backwoods setting and a crude American moon!"

He loved to tease her for her foreign proclivities. It was a bone of contention between them that she had no standards of beauty outside of Italy.

"Don't make me do battle for my opinions to-night," she begged. "It is too exquisite for anything but peace and----"

"And love," he finished, with ever so slight a tremor in his voice.

Her heart gave a responsive bound,

but, womanlike, she hedged.

"I was going to say 'peace and quiet,'" she answered maliciously—"the quiet contemplation of so much loveliness. Do you know the island has acquired a new significance to me within a day or two? Something Mr. Douglas said to me made me appreciate what it stands for to him. He has put his life into it—built it into the

walls and planted it with the trees and yet Mrs. Douglas is not buried here, is she?"

Maxwell nodded.

"Oh, yes, she is," he said. "You will find my uncle goes straight to the spot the moment the doctor lets him leave the house. We Douglases are faithful lovers, Miss Kathleen Smith."

Once more she hedged.

"How do you know my name is Kathleen?" she demanded, almost in a whisper, for his last assurance was very sweet

"I guessed it about the time I began to call you Mavourneen in my heart," he declared audaciously; "although possibly the guess was turned to certainty by this little token;" and he drew from his pocket a cobweb hand-kerchief with the name "Kathleen" clearly embroidered in the corner.

"Did I drop it in the boat yesterday?" she asked, holding out her hand to take it; but Max thrust it back in his

pocket.

"I shall keep it," he said, "because I have a fancy that you marked it yourself. You don't object to my possessing this Kathleen, do you?"

Her heart said, "Which?" but she only answered his shrewd guess about

her handiwork.

"I did mark it myself; it is my one feminine accomplishment, and delicate things like that handkerchief my one extravagance. Don't understand me as defending such folly. For a working woman to squander money on caprices is an offense against intelligence."

"And I consider it an offense against the eternal fitness of things that a woman like you should have to work for anything," he said, hurling love against

fate with glorious unreason.

"You need to readjust your ideas to the times," she said, smiling. "In the twentieth century Eve delves as hard as Adam—sometimes harder."

"But I prefer that she span," he protested; and then added with transpar-

ent sequence of thought:

"I had a telegram from my uncle's bankers this afternoon; they entirely approve of my going into business with Read—call it an 'admirable opening.' How does that strike you, little Miss Kathleen?"

"As very encouraging for you, Mr.

Scott," she said demurely.

"Couldn't it be brought to bear on cobweb pocket-handkerchiefs?" he asked, letting his paddle trail while he

gazed into her eyes.

The idle paddle brought her to her senses. "We are forgetting Nancy!" she exclaimed, conscience-stricken. "While we talk she suffers. And where are we, by the bye? Miles below the farm-landing—how wicked of us!"

"Not so wicked as you think," he returned. "I chose the canoe because I mean to take you all the way by water, up a little shallow stream that will bring us within a stone's throw of the sta-

tion."

For some time he was busy paddling his boat through the tortuous channel of the creek; no easy task where fallen trees lie treacherously hidden and boulders lurk round every curve. Conversation was confined to exclamations like, "Look out for that branch!" or "We were almost on that rock!" till finally he brought up alongside a felled tree that served as a landing, and helped Kathleen ashore.

A short reach of forest lay between them and the station lights that gleamed here and there through leafy vistas.

Maxwell shouldered Kathleen's bundle, and went first, as guide, and she tripped after him, admiring his athletic figure with the primeval love of brute strength that lurks in every woman. They hardly exchanged a word as they strode on through the dimmed moonlight, and yet their companionship had never been so sweet.

At last, when they had nearly emerged from the labyrinth, Kathleen stumbled over a projecting root, and Maxwell, having caught her hand,

didn't let it go.

A sudden distaste for her masquerade came over her; a feeling that concealment must lower her in his estimation, that his standards of honor would be hurt by what she had done, and that she must redeem her conduct by a

speedy confession. Perhaps it was already too late! Some instinct whispered that before their walk was over he would offer her his love, and she must be before him.

She drew a trembling breath.

"Hold my hand tight, Maxwell," she began, "for I need all the courage you can give me to tell you something. I don't know why I feel so frightened, unless it is that your straightforwardness makes me ashamed of my double-dealing. I am your cousin, Kathleen Fitzgerald."

At the beginning of her sentence his clasp tightened tenderly, and then, to her despair, relaxed as she made her

announcement.

"Kathleen Fitzgerald!" he repeated. "My uncle's granddaughter! What an idiot I was not to guess it before! I might have known a perfect stranger couldn't have been to him what you have been. I suppose in a thousand unconscious ways you have brought back the past. He knows, does he not? I trust you haven't concealed it from him?"

If there were an accent on the "him," it was not more than a suggestion, but

it stung.

"He discovered it for himself," she said, with a sigh. It seemed to her that her worst fears were realized. The words of love she had so fondly anticipated were lost in other emotions she could not fathom. She wanted his love, and he was giving her the most genuine cousinly interest.

"Uncle James was kind, I hope!" he exclaimed, and then nodded approval

as Kathleen responded:

"Most kind—most affectionate. I could ask for nothing more considerate."

"I am so glad, Kathleen," he said, taking her hand in a warm, friendly grasp. "Your coming is one of those good things, one of those perfect things, that seem sent like a benediction at the close of his lonely life. I can't tell you how delighted I am for his sake and yours."

"And I," she said, her heart aching at the calm good fellowship of his words-"I wish I could go back to being Kathleen Smith.'

This time it was Maxwell who

sighed.

"God knows how I wish it, little cousin!" he answered, and without another word he led the way to the house where poor suffering Nancy was waiting.

CHAPTER VIII.

Kathleen was pacing up and down a path in the flower garden the afternoon that followed her midnight summons to Nancy. Much had taken place since she parted with her cousin at the postmaster's door, but every little event was seen by her through a mist of unhappiness caused by Maxwell's sudden change of manner. She knew she had done her best to lessen Nancy's pain till Doctor Harper arrived with welcome anesthetics and set the shoulder, and she was sure she had answered all his questions when they returned with Nancy to the island; and yet only the surface of her mind was interested: its depths were always murmuring: "Maxwell doesn't care!" or, "He despises me for creeping by stealth into the family!"

Over and over again her wounded love sought some explanation of her sorrow, only to be tortured by the conclusion that her cousin had tried her in the furnace of his perfect truth and found her wanting. That his interest in her now was purely cousinly admitted of no doubt in her mind, for she had met him in her grandfather's room since her return, and he had asked about Nancy, and her own fatigue, and recommended a nap as casually as if there had been no thrilling moments between in the moonlight, no suggestions of work undertaken all for her, no tender dwelling on her name. A nap, did he say? She felt a fierce excitement

that utterly forbade sleep.

Soon after lunch Mr. Douglas had summoned William and Maxwell to the interview she so dreaded, and no word as to the result had reached her in the far-off room where she sat by Nancy's bedside. At sunset her watching was

relieved by the housemaid, and, craving the fresh air, she started for the garden. As she went the change in her position was quickly revealed. Servant after servant stopped her with some pleasant word of welcome to the lady of the house-phrases that showed that she had already won respect, and only good-will greeted her elevation from nurse to granddaughter. It was like balm to her wounded spirit, but it couldn't still the pain of disappointed love that rankled in her heart.

She was living over the scene in the woods as she paced up and down a path in the rose garden, when a shrill quavering tune reached her ears, whistled by somebody advancing down an alley of pleached locusts. The gavness of the melody suggested Maxwell, and her heart beat fast when she saw a disreputable old Panama hat—a prime favorite with him-bobbing through the trees. But the gladness was only for a minute; her reason quickly told her that the thin, uncertain sounds never issued from her cousin's young lungs. Almost unconsciously she began to murmur the words of the old glee:

Oh, don't you know the muffin man?

and keep time to it with her feet, as Doctor Harper emerged from the alley with his borrowed hat and air of tri-

umphant gaiety.

"Did you hear that tune I was whistling?" he demanded, making a flourishing bow, and pressing Maxwell's hat to his breast. "That was a pæan of thanksgiving-in the words of that immortal song: 'We all of us know the muffin man!' Allow me, my dear child, to offer you my felicitations. From the inscrutable Mr. William Douglas to the scullery maid I have just encountered, chasing the kitchen cat, 'We all of us know his name,' which perhaps is scarcely to be wondered at, considering your grandfather has proclaimed your identity to his entire household."

She smiled faintly. If Doctor Harper had a weakness, it was for unsea-

sonable joking.

"I presume I am the muffin man," she answered, "although a certain ambiguity in your sentence points equally to the kitchen cat. I wish, however, there had never been any concealment in regard to me and my name. I begin to suspect that simple truth is the wiser as well as the more honorable course."

The doctor looked indulgent.

"This lesson in the A B C's of ethics is admirable," he said, "but hardly illuminating as applied to your case. I should say that, considering your grandfather's feeble heart, our little ruse of introducing you professionally till he learned to like you for yourself has succeeded to a charm. When the disclosure took place, the pleasure almost eliminated the element of shock."

"With my grandfather, yes," she agreed. "His kindness condones all my faults, but in my cousin's estimation I should stand better if I had from the first confessed who I was."

If Doctor Harper had been ambiguous in regard to the kitchen cat, she was equally so in her use of the word "cousins." To the ear it might mean both or either, and her interlocutor determined to know which.

"Dear me!" he said, with a malicious smile. "Who would have thought William so particular, or Maxwell such a

prig!

She fell promptly into the snare.

"I really do not care what William thinks!" she exclaimed testily. "He is a man I shall never really like. But I cannot imagine any one calling Maxwell a prig. I never knew a person more free from bumptiousness, so without vanity. It is only because he is so straightforward that I feel ashamed of masquerading."

The doctor's curiosity in regard to her preferences being satisfied, he

changed the subject.

"You haven't asked me how the interview went off," he said slyly.

Kathleen grew crimson with self-reproach at having forgotten to ask about her grandfather, in the absorption of her own affairs and Maxwell's. The agitation incident to announcing her to his nephews had seemed a grave danger only yesterday, and she was passing it over as a thing without interest. "Of course I want to know," she urged, "Did he bear it well?"

"Remarkably," Doctor Harper responded. "His happiness in having you for a granddaughter seems to have given him a new lease of life. He told the boys about it without the least excitement, and even went into an account of his quarrel with your parents as an explanation of why he had never heard of your birth. He finally told them plainly he meant to alter his will, as they probably anticipated, but that they could trust him to remember his obligations to them."

"And my cousins—how did they take

it?" she asked shyly.

"William's complexion changed from white to mahogany and back again, and then he smiled, showing his side teeth like an amiable wolf. He said nobody could be as pleased as he was—and he didn't fall dead, either!"

"And Maxwell?" she asked, ignoring the graphic picture of William's cha-

grin.

"Ah, well, Max didn't turn on any colored lights. He said you had mentioned it to him the night before, and it was, therefore, no surprise, but he thought his uncle ought to remember in altering his will that you were the direct heir, and deal with them accordingly; and then he said that he hadn't words to express his admiration for you, and so he had better let it alone."

She gave a little loving sigh.

"I wish my grandfather would not alter his will!" she exclaimed. "Couldn't he add a clause giving me just enough to keep me if my health failed? Couldn't I say this to him, Doctor Harper? I have it so at heart!"

"Your heart is set upon not undermining William's expectations," he said teasingly. "Of course you know Maxwell is striking out for himself. He leaves for town this very evening, to begin his career in Wall Street—and very sensible conduct it is, too."

Maxwell going away, and without a word! The garden path seemed to undulate strangely, but she conquered the momentary weakness and said:

"Whether Maxwell is going into business or not has nothing to do with the injustice of my uncle taking away any part of the fortune he has brought up my cousins to expect. He hasn't the moral right to do it. May I not tell him so, Doctor Harper? Would it be improper to speak of his will?"

The doctor was getting his full share

of benevolent amusement.

"Rather too stimulating a subject for an invalid," he said, with perfect gravity. "I have even had patients who failed to be cheered by it. I fancy the Douglas fortune is large enough to furnish bread and butter all round, and perhaps jam as well. In plain words, Kathleen, your grandfather is an enormously rich man. So suppose you allow him to manage his own affairs.'

She felt snubbed and infinitely unhappy, and was just turning to leave her dominating companion, when William came round a turn of a hedge, with conscious virtue stamped on every

feature.

"I am charged with a message to you, cousin Kathleen," he said, smiling to mark his acceptance of the relationship. "My uncle desires that you will take the head of the table at dinner this evening, and I am to say that he intends joining us at dessert, to drink your health. May I suggest that dinner is in half-an-hour?"

The caution recalled to Kathleen the evening of her arrival, when William exhibited the same anxiety about the dinner hour; only on that occasion he was indifferent as to whether she went full or hungry. His point of view had

shifted at last.

The doctor hurried back to see Mr. Douglas and determine whether he were fit to carry out his plan of joining the family at the end of dinner, and Kathleen and William sauntered slowly back to the house. William exerted himself to be agreeable. He spoke of his uncle's happiness and his own pleasure in such a delightful addition to the household, adding-what indeed seemed true enough-that it left him and Maxwell with a comparatively free foot. If she had not overheard his

abuse of Doctor Harper and herself that first evening, his conduct would seem ideal now.

We are seldom antagonized by what people say to us, so much as by what reaches us through unauthorized channels, and while Kathleen despised the means by which she had acquired a more complete knowledge of William than his words betrayed, she nevertheless congratulated herself in being proof against his blandishments. His efforts to please her at present were genuine,

whatever the motive.

Upon reaching her own room, Kathleen was confronted by the usual feminine problem as to what to wear. She remembered with chagrin how inadequate her wardrobe was to her present position, and almost made up her mind to put on a fresh white uniform as least likely to challenge remark; but she thought better of it, and took her one evening dress from her trunk and shook out its folds. It was blackwhat impecunious lady is without the one black dress that defies fashion!and when the housemaid came, in response to her bell, she sent her into the garden for some roses to relieve the somberness, and lastly she fastened round her neck a black velvet ribbon with a diamond bow-knot that had once been her mother's. Few of Mrs. Fitzgerald's trinkets survived their vicissitudes, and this was highly prized.

"You do look beautiful, miss," said the housemaid. "My! ain't your neck

and arms like a statur.

There was some comfort in that. A fine figure makes almost as fine a bird

as fine feathers.

Kathleen was so ignorant of the habits of the house that she actually did not know in what room she should find the family waiting for dinner, but her embarrassment was relieved by William, who came down directly behind her and led the way into the great salon on the right of the hall.

At a window Doctor Harper and Maxwell stood in earnest conversation. their figures silhouetted against the twilight, which still did more toward illuminating the vast room than the three or four lamps dotted here and there on the marquetry tables.

Doctor Harper's voice came clearly to her as she crossed the room; he seemed to be urging something which Maxwell had resisted.

"I agree with you," he said. "You ought to get to work. You are leading a lazy, enervating life here. But, at the same time, you can surely arrange to come back at short intervals. It is not safe for you to leave your uncle for any length of time. This gain he has made in strength is a mere flash in the pan-the result of his happiness about Kathleen. I have always thought his conscience troubled him for his severity to Mrs. Fitzgerald, and the opportunity to do for the daughter what he failed to do for the mother is probably a great comfort to him and has stimulated him tremendously; but the effect won't last. Mark my words, Max: spend as much time with him now as you can, for he won't be here many months."

The rustle of Kathleen's dress attracted their attention, and they came to meet her, the doctor exclaiming:

"God bless my soul, how like your mother you look!"

And Maxwell said:

"Did you know this was to be my last dinner at home for a long time, when you decided to honor it with your presence?"

He paid her no compliment, but he looked at her as if his eyes were stamping her image for all time on his brain.

"Isn't this a very sudden determination?" she said, so low that he alone could hear. "When did you decide to go?"

"My going this particular evening is a sudden determination," he answered. "As to the time when I decided, it was soon after midnight, in some woods near the station that you may possibly remember, little cousin. It is absurdly twentieth century to have the path of honor point you to Wall Street by means of the railway."

A new hope flashed into Kathleen's heart. Perhaps he didn't despise her concealments; perhaps his strange conduct was the result of some Quixotic idea of what was due to her new position and his—the money that he cheerfully renounced for her sake should not be regained by marriage; he must leave her choice-free for the present, at all events. In the glow of this suspicion she answered:

"Be careful, Maxwell; sometimes the path of honor is pursued in hobnailed boots right over other people's feelings;" and before he could reply, Bond threw open the door and announced

dinner.

They had been talking a little apart, in low tones that could not reach the others, but now William came forward and offered her his arm with an old-fashioned ceremony that would have become his uncle, and they went out to dinner.

It was her first introduction to the dining-room; a feeling of dignity and reserve had confined her curiosity in regard to the house to the few rooms her duties opened to her. It was more homelike than the salon they had just left, though equally impressive in its proportions, with a lofty ceiling and walls paneled high with carved oak. The wall space above this wainscot was literally covered with portraits of Douglases for six generations; some in lace and love-locks, some in cropped hair and ruffs; ladies in powder and out of it; and here and there a masterpiece the family had acquired, a Sir Joshua, a Lely, a Van Dyck; but the picture par excellence that compelled your admiration was a full-length portrait of a young woman, which hung above the fireplace. Look where you would, your eye came back to the exquisite distinction of that highbred face. It seemed to turn mere flesh-and-blood beauty into vulgarity, as if the refinement of all the ages had concentrated its essence in the subtleness of her organization.

Instinctively Kathleen knew it was her grandmother; knew and understood the adoration that had chained her grandfather for fifty years to the scene of his brief felicity. She had but a momentary glimpse, for her back was toward it when she had once taken her seat, and she noticed the chair that faced it at the foot of the table was

left vacant.

It was years since Kathleen had seen anything so splendid as her grandfather's dinner-table, with its superb silver tankards and flagons of wonderful workmanship, flowers and fruits in dishes of crystal and gold, candlesticks like Corinthian columns, and linen woven with the Douglas arms. It all seemed a matter of course to her cousins, but it gave keen pleasure to her beauty-loving soul. And then the conversation of her companions was so stimulating; they talked intelligently of things she longed to know about, and they managed to include her, so that she felt neither ignorant nor neglected. Maxwell introduced her to her relations on the walls, and they became very merry in presenting each other with the traits and features grotesquely portrayed by some of the artists. Finally, when dessert was put upon the table. Bond set a decanter that looked like vitrified lace before the empty place, and Max disappeared and presently returned with his uncle leaning on his arm, and then they all sprang to their feet in joyful welcome.

He was in evening dress, which seemed to accentuate the gauntness of his great frame, though he bore himself with a grace and dignity peculiarly his own. He bent his beautiful white head in salutation to every one, and when Bond pulled out his chair and whispered: "We are all glad to see you down, sir," his smile of acknowledgment took in every servant in the

room.

The hawklike flash of his eyes was softened to a tender glow as his glance

caught Kathleen's.

Bond filled the glasses from the marvelous decanter, saying, in a tone that betrayed his profound respect for the vintage he was dispensing:

"Camponario, sir, of 1834."
To which Mr. Douglas answered:

"It is worthy of the occasion, Bond; the best Madeira in my cellar," and then, seeing the glasses were all charged, he turned to Kathleen, say-

ng:

"My dear granddaughter, we drink to your joyful restoration to your family, and offer you a share in all that we have, except our hearts, and those we give to you out and out—don't we, boys?" he asked, turning to William and Maxwell.

He was strongly moved, but evidently trying to keep to the commonplace, to avoid anything like sentimentality.

The tears stood in Kathleen's eyes. "Believe me," she said, "in giving me your affection, you have given all I want."

"It is yours," he said, "for your own sake, for your mother's, and for——" he raised his eyes to the portrait of his wife, but left the sentence

incomplete.

He seemed to be afraid of casting a shadow from his own sorrows over an occasion he wished to make especially joyful, and with a sudden rallying of his spirits to an almost youthful gaiety, he held them entranced for half-anhour by his rare powers of conversation, his wit, his reminiscences, till Doctor Harper cried a halt and ordered him to bed, declaring he had meant to allow him only ten minutes, and he had charmed him into forgetfulness for an unconscionable length of time.

It was a memory they all treasured in the days that were to come.

CHAPTER IX.

Nearly a week had passed since the memorable evening when Mr. Douglas had joined the family after dinner, but he had not repeated the experiment. Doctor Harper still lingered, declaring he was taking a holiday; that he was not visiting the island professionally, and consequently any one mentioning the word "health" to him did so at his peril. It was a childlike device for concealing from his old friend the true object of his remaining; he feared the effect of so much excitement, and wished to be on hand in case of a relapse.

Mr. Douglas had sent to town for his lawyer, and was busy every morning adjusting his affairs. He insisted in conveying the island and a certain portion of the home farm to Kathleen during his lifetime, and the deed had already gone to the county town for record, and now he was occupied in making a new will. He asked no advice and made no confidences, and his disposal of the island was known only by his requesting Kathleen to allow him to be her guest for the rest of his life. She was in the strange position of a landed proprietor without a cent to pay her taxes.

It seemed especially unfair to William, who had always supposed he was to inherit the island, and, to do him justice, he had worked hard to beautify and cultivate it, whereas Kathleen was a stranger, without associations, and with no knowledge to guide her in the management of such a place. The adopted son of the house felt bitterly, and there was some excuse for his vexation. That he was able to conceal his wounded feelings from Kathleen showed a strong motive for self-control.

The day was sultry, the air peculiarly lifeless, with a heaviness old-fashioned weather-prophets would ascribe to an approaching earthquake or cyclone.

Kathleen settled herself by a window in her own boudoir, and tried to give her attention to her reading; she was pursuing a course of English literature under her grandfather's guidance, with an appreciation he found most gratifying; but the heat was too great to be ignored-you can't be interested in the "Canterbury Tales" if your fingers stick to the pages and your nerves are playing abnormal tricks. The front of the house might be more breezy, but Mr. Douglas was in the library with Mr. Bromley, the lawyer, and that refuge was impracticable, so, with the great Chaucer tucked under her arm, she went down to the salon and established herself in a chair like a throne, with a footstool regally placed. The windows were open on the terrace, and the scent of flowers came in strongly, as if the overpowering heat were drawing the essence from their hearts.

Kathleen had hardly opened her book before the ticktack of little claws on the hard-wood floor announced a fourfooted visitor, and Lilly came in timidly, with the depressed tail and insinuating wriggle of the unwelcome dog, and put one paw on the footstool. She was not unwelcome to Kathleen, however: love for the master readily overflowed to his dog, and Chaucer was once more tossed aside, while Lilly was clasped in her arms. Absurd little beast with her smashed-in nose and soft, expressive eyes! The wrinkles in her face were very sad this morning, and the mournful eyes said: "He is gone." Silly Kathleen kissed her forehead and whispered:

"We miss him, don't we, Lilly?"
Then another step sounded, this time
a two-legged step, and William looked
in and said:

"My dear Kathleen, don't let that dog impose upon you. She is never allowed in this room."

At which Kathleen for the first time remembered that the house was hers, and felt like telling William that Maxwell's dog was more welcome than he could ever be; but was wise enough to say nothing. She almost regretted her forbearance when William drew a chair close to hers—so close that the arms touched, and, as it faced the opposite way, brought them literally tête-à-tête.

"I am glad to find you alone," he said. "I have been trying to unburden my mind to you for several days. If you had not been brought up abroad, I might hesitate to dash into the subject, but I am sure you are enough of a foreigner to understand my motives, and will pay me the compliment of listening."

"You are very mysterious," she responded, thoroughly puzzled, for her knowledge of his relations with Stella precluded the idea of love-making on his part, and she could not think of any subject he could wish to discuss privately.

"I am the last of the Douglases," he

said, expanding his ample chest in conscious pride. "Will you make Uncle James and my unworthy self happy by marrying me? I am under no delusions about love—I know that you look upon me only as a cousin whom you hardly know; but if devotion and admiration on my part can win your affection, you may be sure I shall use my utmost endeavor to make you care for me. I lay my heart at your feet, Kathleen. Forgive my bluntness, but for some reason I fancied you would be best pleased to have the truth plainly urged."

"Surely this suggestion does not come from my grandfather!" she exclaimed, shrinking to the farthest limits

of her chair.

"No," he said; "but you must recognize how agreeable it would be to him. I fear my abruptness has displeased

you.'

vou."

"I am always best pleased with truth," she answered, "and so I must tell you plainly that a marriage of convenience is perfectly abhorrent to me. I am sure I shall find much in you to admire as a cousin, but I cannot marry

William could hardly be patient with this romantic nonsense. The new will his uncle was even now completing would be signed and witnessed before he could burst in upon Mr. Douglas with the good news, if this silly girl wasted any more time. Should she agree to marry him, they might easily secure three-quarters of the Douglas fortune; perhaps more. She had shown extraordinary finesse in the way she had wriggled herself into her grandfather's affections, and this high-minded talk about truth was quite absurd. Still, he affected to fall in with her mood. She was setting up objections for him to knock down, so as not to yield too easily. He knew women!

"Surely," he said persuasively, "you have seen plenty of happy marriages abroad made in that way; the very happiest, I think, for the reason that mature judgment is brought to the selection instead of a girl's wandering fancy. Since you have come to us,

Uncle James finds it hard to deal justly with us all. How inexpressibly happy it would make him if I could say: 'Kathleen's interests and mine are one!'

She thought she saw nobility of intention in this suggestion, and answered

with a new courtesy:

"You mean that you think it would make my grandfather's task easier if you could say plainly that he need not leave anything to me in his will 'because you are willing to share your part with me? This is generous conduct on your part—loyal to Maxwell and considerate to grandpapa's difficulties; but, even so, I cannot marry you. I am sorry, for I respect your disinterestedness."

He was foolish enough to disclaim the unselfishness her simplicity ac-

corded him.

"I can't quite follow you," he exclaimed. "I am not asking you to marry me in order to curtail your expectations; on the contrary, I am asking you to join me in keeping Uncle James' great fortune intact. You and I together should represent nearly the whole."

His dark face was flushed with the earnestness of his pleading. He did not see the contempt in her eyes.

"How about Maxwell?" she asked

sternly.

"Oh, Max will get enough," he responded. "He is such a simple soul that a large fortune would be thrown away upon him. Besides, he has just had some money to put into his business."

"This talk about my grandfather's money, as if he were dead, is indecent," she said. "I am ashamed to have listened to you, though Heaven knows it was only in the hope of abrogating any claims of my own. Your views in regard to Maxwell are mean in the extreme. He is entitled to just as much as you, and much, much more than I. I am only an interloper. Please understand, once and for all, I will not be a party to your schemes, and I wouldn't marry you if—if——"

She had risen in her excitement and

stood clasping Lilly to her heart while she tried to curb her angry words. Her eyes were cast down, as if she hated to meet his avaricious glare, and her breath came almost in sobs.

William smiled in his crooked way, showing his teeth on one side in wolfish fashion, as he observed in a taunting voice:

"Perhaps you would not find a combination of fortunes so indecent if the suggestion had come from Maxwell."

She didn't blush, but looked him steadily in the face as she answered:

"Anything that Maxwell suggested would commend itself to me because I should know his motives were honest."

"And when he asks you to be his wife?" interrogated William.

"Then I shall make up my mind what to answer," she said, at the end of her patience, "and in the meanwhile you will please dismiss me and my affairs from your mind."

"You are not angry, Kathleen, are you?" he urged. "It is not usually considered an insult to pay a woman the highest compliment in your power—to ask her to marry you."

"Not usually," she answered shortly, and then a chatter of voices came from the hall, and Mr. Bromley passed the open door, closely followed by Stella Fane and her brother.

"Up in the library?" Stella chirped. 'Isn't it lucky my brother and I happened to be on the island just when Mr. Douglas wanted us to witness his will. It means he hasn't left us anything, doesn't it, Mr. Bromley? But, then, perhaps he has remembered popper."

William's face was a study; astonishment, anger, hopeless disappointment, flitted over it in rapid succession.
The chance to change the will was out
of his control; it was evidently completed, and Stella Fane, who was not
afraid of man or devil, was to be
brought into personal relations with Mr.
Douglas! Suppose she ventured to
complain of him to his uncle; suppose
she told the truth about the secret meetings and the love-making, and her ridic-

ulous idea that he meant to marry her—what incalculable mischief she could do! He sprang to his feet and hurried to the door, meaning to overtake her on the stairs with a caution that should have the complexion of a threat, but he walked directly into Doctor Harper, who took him by the arm and wheeled him back into the salon.

"You are not wanted up-stairs," he said. "Mr. Douglas has completed his will, and is about to sign it in the presence of witnesses. It has been too much for him—he had a very bad attack of his heart trouble half-an-hour ago, so that I had to be summoned. I wanted him to let the whole thing go till tomorrow, but he is so determined that I had to yield. I thought opposition would excite him more. By the way, William, he wants you to order the launch to take Mr. Bromley across in time for the afternoon train."

"It can't be done," said William bruskly. "It blew out a cylinder-head this morning, trying to tow a coal barge to the property of the coal barge."

to the power-house."

"Nobody cares what especial boat you order," said Doctor Harper, recognizing his bad temper. "Mr. Douglas desires you to see that Bromley catches the afternoon train. There must be other steam or naphtha boats."

"All busy towing coal," said William, leaving the room.

Doctor Harper looked after him with his guizzical smile.

"Something has worried our sweet William to-day," he said, glancing at Kathleen; "not you, my dear, I trust. Ah, there is lunch! Your grandfather wants to know whether you will take your lunch with him in the library. Don't let him talk about the will. Keep to safe subjects—I recommend the weather."

"Well, I don't," she answered, laughing, as a heavy growl of thunder rolled over their heads and seemed to reecho from the opposite shore.

"Just what we need to freshen the air," said the optimistic doctor, and Kathleen, hearing Stella and her brother on their way down-stairs, hastened to join her grandfather.

He was standing at the library window, looking out at the approaching storm, which seemed to be advancing from two directions at once, for while the sky in the west was of an inky blackness, the clouds in the south were still more threatening; they were piled in ragged masses, and in the center a bulging, lead-colored curtain seemed to touch the top of the trees. In the west the lightning flashed rosily, whereas in the south it zigzagged in cracks across the horizon, and the thunder seemed to split the ear in its fierce antiphony to the rolling bass notes of the other storm.

Kathleen came to his side and took his hand; she was frightened at the whiteness of his face.

"Come and sit down," she said. "You

look so tired.'

His arm went round her shoulders. and he stooped and kissed her forehead.

"My dearest," he said, "for the first time I am at rest; for I have just completed my arrangements for your future. I told you yesterday that I had deeded this place to you during my life, knowing that I should be your welcome guest; but I have now given you in my will a half interest in all that I have: the other half I have divided between William and Maxwell, with the exception of legacies to friends and servants. No, don't protest; their fortunes will be ample. I am only doing belated justice to your mother. My vindictiveness seems horrible to me now. Not that money can wipe away unkindness," he added, with a deep

Seeing his agitation, she hardly knew what to do. Doctor Harper had ordered her to talk of anything rather than the will, and yet she felt the grossest injustice was being done to her cousins. She was saved for the moment by a servant coming in with the lunch. One of the blessings of civilized life is its power to quell exaggerated feeling with the dull round of domestic events. In the presence of the servant they sat down to their luncheon and talked about the weather, according to prescription, and, indeed, in the perpetual noise of cloud answering to cloud, it was difficult to talk at all. In the middle of the meal they were interrupted by Mr. Bromley dashing in, hat in hand, and exclaiming, as he thrust some papers into a satchel:

"I must say good-by to you, sir. I understand there is some tie-up in your boats, and Miss Fane has offered to get me over to the farm in her sailboat in time for me to catch the train. have telephoned for a trap to be waiting, and by starting at once we hope to get across before the storm breaks.

"You can't do it, Bromley!" shouted Mr. Douglas, but the man of law was already beyond the voice of reason, and in another moment they heard him in the portico calling good-by to William.

Mr. Douglas pushed back his chair and hastened to the window, with steps so uncertain that Kathleen rushed after him, and together they stepped out on

the roof of the portico.

Iim Fane was in the act of pushing the boat from the stairs with an oar, and Mr. Bromley, acting as his aid, was hoisting the sail, while Stella, wrapped in a scarlet waterproof, made a brilliant splash of color in the gathering gloom.

"Come back!" Mr. Douglas called, in wild alarm. "I forbid you to leave

But if his voice reached them, they were now powerless to obey, because Bromley's inexperience had succeeded in jamming the sail so that it would neither go up nor down, and, a puff of wind catching it, they were driven a hundred yards to the east, careening dangerously. In this dilemma the storm struck them. It came leaping up the lake, tearing off the tree-tops on the banks, lashing the water into whitecaps, howling and yelling like an army of demons.

Kathleen saw it coming, and tried to draw her grandfather into the house, but he waited a moment too long, held by the frightful fascination of the boat's peril. As they stepped into the library, the wind was upon them; it rushed through the casement with cyclone force, and, tearing Mr. Douglas from

Kathleen's arms, it hurled him to the floor, where he lay stunned, unconscious of the pandemonium that raged. Glass crashed on all sides, doors slammed, vases were blown over, but the girl thought only of that still figure, with its awful indifference to the tumult. Terror for his life lifted her above or-

dinary fear.

Hurrying to the bell, she rang violently for assistance and then, realizing the risk of leaving him before the window, exposed to the rain that now fell in torrents, she managed to drag him to a place of shelter. She loos-ened his collar and hastily tried such restoratives as she had found efficacious on other occasions, but without success. He was breathing, though the shadows in his face were growing more and more deathly. In wild alarm she again rang the bell, and then she went to the head of the stairs and called for help. There was not a sound but the sighing of the wind in the hall below and the swish of the rain against the windows. Where were all the servants, where was Doctor Harper, she asked herself in amazement; surely in such an emergency as this awful storm the master's safety should have been the first consideration for the whole household, and no one had even come to shut his windows. At last she determined to leave him, and go herself to find the doctor, but as she lifted the helpless head from her knee, Doctor Harper came in the door.

His clothes were drenched; even his hair was plastered to his head, and the water churned in his shoes as he crossed the floor, but Kathleen felt no curiosity in regard to his plight—only a burning impatience to get him to her grandfather's side. Like most women, she

was made angry by fright.
"Oh, be quick!" she cried, as he paused in astonishment at the scene. "Even now you may be too late. He has had a fall. Why didn't somebody

come to him when I rang?"

He didn't answer her; he was kneeling beside his old friend, feeling for the pulses that would never beat again and the heart-throb that was dumb.

"There is nothing to be done, Kathleen," he said gently. "He is dead."

A feeling of hopeless desolation made her turn on her friend. Where had he been while this precious life was ebbing? She couldn't keep the reproach out of her voice as she said:

"You might have saved him if only

you had come before."

He was very patient with her, understanding her distress.

"No one could have saved him, my

child. I am sorry I was out of the house. There has been an accidentpoor Bromley is drowned, and we rescued Stella and Jim Fane with difficulty."

Kathleen was a tender-hearted woman, but she was too miserable at the moment to care; her heart was crying out against her fate. She had learned to love this lonely old man with a gratitude and intensity only the poor in friends can know; and he was gone.

CHAPTER X.

Old James Douglas was buried beside the wife he had loved and mourned so many years; buried in the seclusion of the plot under the cedars, with a pomp and ceremony he would have resented had a choice been his; but William had assumed command, and he liked display. The telegrams to New York had missed Maxwell, who had gone out of town to spend Sunday, leaving no address-after the manner of young men-so, although Mr. Douglas' death occurred on Friday afternoon, he did not reach the island till Monday night; and the funeral took place on Tuesday. The bishop of the diocese, the clergy from the nearest town, certain old comrades from various cities, business men who held his millions in respect, together with all the farm-hands and his household, followed his coffin to the grave.

Mr. Bromley's body had been recovered from the lake, but the satchel containing the new will had not been found, and the law firm to which poor Bromley had belonged sent a junior member to attend the funeral-A. M.

Dix — who, at William's request, brought the previous will, which they

had in their custody.

Kathleen did not see Maxwell alone till after the funeral, but his anxiety for her comfort, his consideration for her every wish, made itself felt from the moment he entered the house, and took away her desolate sense of being once more alone in the world.

When the services at the grave were over, and the guests, after partaking of a hearty luncheon with a gaiety befitting a summer fête, were hurrying away to catch the afternoon train, Maxwell sent a note to Kathleen, asking whether he might come for her after dinner, to go for a walk in the garden.

So just when the long June day had faded and the stars were out, Max slipped away from the table, where William was presiding over the after-dinner talk, and, tapping at the boudoir door, was confronted by Nancy.

"Now, Mr. Maxwell," she began, "don't you be keeping our young lady out in the dew till she takes cold. I've sent her into her own room to put on thick-soled shoes. 'Tain't enough for folks to be unhappy unless they get sick atop of it! As if it helped them that's gone to make more trouble for the livin'!"

Nancy adored Maxwell, but always felt it her privilege to scold him, from the day he had come to the island, an orphaned child of five.

"I'll take care of her," he promised

heartily.

"It's pretty poor care you've taken of her interests among you, if what I hear is true," said Nancy tartly. "What call had Mr. William to send that poor Mr. Bromley out with Stella Fane in a cockle-shell to lose Mr. Douglas' will in the lake, and then to give out how he means to stand by the old will that doesn't leave the child a penny? If you want to know what I think about it, I'll tell you. I believe Stella Fane knows what became of that lawyer's satchel, so I do!"

"Nonsense!" said Maxwell sternly.
"You are talking foolishly and cruelly."
Nancy tossed her head. "Sure, the

sailboat didn't sink, and Stella was saved dry as a bone, except for the rain. Mr. Bromley was knocked overboard when the mast snapped, and I guess it struck his head, for he had a right to rise three times, and he never even showed up once. Then out comes Doctor Harper and Mr. William in a rowboat, and the doctor popped right into the lake, thinking he might catch the lawyer floating under water—he didn't, though—and they took off Jim and Stella, and in my opinion they might have left them, for the sailboat just drifted up the lake, and Stella went for it herself later in the day with one of the lads from the farm and towed it home."

Nancy looked preternaturally wise. "You're a very silly old woman," Maxwell assured her. "What interest could Stella possibly have in suppressing the will, even if she had the courage to commit such a crime. The satchel is lying safe enough at the bottom of the lake, but the will must

be pulp by this time."

"Pulp!" she echoed indignantly. "Pulp is just what some folks has made of Miss Kathleen's rights! But, mark my words, Mr. Scott, God protects the orphan, and there ain't no blessing on money kept from the innocent."

"Well, you needn't scold me," he answered, laughing. "Miss Kathleen is welcome to all I have in the world, and myself along with it. If you'll take yourself off, I may have a chance to

tell her so."

As he made this avowal the old woman's eyes filled with tears.

"God grant she takes you, Mr. Maxwell," she said earnestly, "for you've the spirit of the Douglas family, if you haven't the name. There's them as has the name and not the spirit."

"Here comes Miss Kathleen," Maxwell whispered in caution, as an inner door opened into the boudoir, and the girl in her deep mourning joined them

in the hall.

Nancy, who loved to play waitingmaid, went back into the room to straighten her young lady's things, and the cousins stole silently down the stair-

case and out into the night. So sweet the girl looked, so gentle and composed, that Maxwell's thoughts, which a moment before had been hot with love, grew tender with pity and self-accusa-Why had he not asked her to marry him that night in the woods, when the words were on his lips and her hand in his? If he had, she might have been saved the loneliness of the sorrow she had just passed through, for he knew she loved him even as he loved her, and his folly had thrown her back upon herself. Folly, did he call it? It was pride. He had given it high-sounding names, such as honor, disinterestedness, restraint, but he knew these were specious phrases invented to conceal a wretched motive. He had expected to confer; he found suddenly he would be in a position to accept. He had expected to renounce his claims in favor of an unknown heir; he found he had unwittingly won the heir and the fortune-and his words of love froze unspoken.

He had never meant to give her up, but he wanted to show his mettle to his uncle, to prove his independence, before he asked for Kathleen, and then, too, with shame be it confessed. he shrank from the taunts of William.

He knew better now; his short absence had taught him that for him life meant Kathleen, rich or poor. He felt sure her clear-sighted nobility must have comprehended the workings of his mind, and despised them. Would she forgive?

All this came overwhelmingly upon him as they stole like conspirators through the halls, and he meant to confess it, but when once they got beyond the lights of the house, with only the stars to guide their footsteps, for some reason explanations seemed singularly out of place, and instead his arms went round her and his confession was, "I love you."

A happy pair of lovers were those wandering among the roses, with hearts so concentrated on each other that the sensuous beauty of their surroundings seemed but a proper setting for the perfection of their romance. Finally they came to the garden walk along the lake, where the little goblin overhung the balustrade, and where a stone settle in a bower of honeysuckle invited them to rest, and there they sat down, for love is ever reposeful. If any one doubts this statement. I refer them to the impassioned love-making of a certain young Venetian gentleman named Lorenzo, whose "Sit, Jessica," is the prelude to the most adorable moonlit poetry

of all time.

There happened to be no moon to wake Maxwell's eloquence, and Kathleen was too intent upon her own new happiness to recall the historic philandering of old-world lovers, but she sat beside her cousin under the honeysuckles and told him all her heart, and when at last he began the confessions that had so oppressed him, he found his conduct had been just what she most admired in him! Indeed, she indulged herself in so vehement an invective against the love of money, and against men who degraded love to considerations of expediency, that a more suspicious person than Maxwell might have guessed who was the offender. then they fell to making their future plans without that overshadowing "if" that parental prudence usually imposes on youthful impatience. These young people were a law to themselves, they owed duty to no one, and if Kathleen were penniless, it only meant that Maxwell would be all the richer, so they could marry when they pleased. Maxwell went so far as to suggest that they should do so before his return to town, urging in extenuation of such haste Kathleen's unprotected position; but she was deaf to his entreaties. She said the island was her home, left to her by her grandfather, so that she should have a refuge, and with Nancy to take care of her, there was no reason why she should not live there alone till the first months of her mourning were After that she would follow Maxwell to the end of the world, if he wished it. From that they began talking of the old man who was gone; of all that they owed to him, of his high ideals, his chivalry, his nobility of character—till so much time had slipped away that nearly all the lights in the villa were out. Kathleen started to her feet in dismay, and with her hand in Maxwell's hurried back to Nancy.

As the sound of their footsteps passed beyond the garden, a woman came from behind the little goblin and stood listening on the path. Her strong shoulders were squared resolutely as she walked toward the house, and the train of her sweeping evening dress trailed after her like a tragedy queen's. The keynote of her appearance was self-assertion; it seemed to challenge the trees and the flowers-nay, the very stars in heaven -to show cause why old Fane's daughter shouldn't wear as fine clothes of an evening as any other handsome woman keeping tryst with her lover. She had not walked very far before William came from the opposite direction, with his hands in his pockets and the feet of a laggard.

"What under heaven do you want at this hour of the night?" he began. "I got your note some time ago, but I couldn't come till the bishop went to

bed."

"It was as well," she answered; "there were others in the garden."

"Look here, Stella," he went on, "you are always complaining that I make you conspicuous; but if any one sees us tonight, I beg to observe that the fault is yours, not mine."

"I had to see you before to-morrow," she answered passionately, "and this was the only way. You have hardly

been near me for ten days."

"Really," he said, shrugging his shoulders, "I should think the circumstances might explain themselves."

"William," she said solemnly, "when a man loves a woman, he turns to her in trouble. Do you love me as you did? Speak the truth; a great deal

hangs upon it."

He sighed wearily. "I suppose I do; but if you mean, do I feel like making love to you at present, I do not, most decidedly; and I advise you to go home and go to bed. You ought not to be here alone and at this hour—it isn't respectable."

"Respectable!" she echoed. "This is a new freak for you to be particular about my good name. Why, you made me the talk of the farm and the servants' hall, till people say things of us that make my blood boil. I can bear it no longer. Will you marry me, William, and put an end to these lies?"

Her breath came in short gasps; her self-confidence melted for the moment

in her love for the man.

"My dear girl," he said languidly, "you must be crazy. Have I ever given you reason to suppose I intended any-

thing quite so radical?"

"Yes, yes," she cried; "in a thousand ways you have made me believe it, if not in so many words! I was prepared to sin for your sake, William; but not in the way you think. See, I give you one last chance—will you marry me or will you not?"

She stood facing him in the path, her head thrown back and her eyes flashing

defiance.

"I will not," he said simply, without

a trace of emotion.

"You will not!" she repeated bitterly, but with a calmness nearly equal to his own. "Then I shall strike where it will hurt you most, and that is not at your heart, William Douglas."

"I think we have had enough melodrama for one evening," he said air-

ily. "Suppose we go home."

Stella turned without a word and went through the garden and up the steps by the cascade, to the north end of the island, where a man was waiting for her in a boat.

"Well, daughter, did you bring him to terms?" asked old Fane, as he helped

her over the side.

But his question went unanswered; she was not in a mood to gratify his curiosity, and he rowed in silence to the shore. As they reached the farmlanding, one confidence burst from her as if its discovery drew the worst sting from her mortification.

"Miss Fitzgerald has nothing to do with it," she said fiercely. "I was wrong to be jealous of her. She cares more for Maxwell Scott's little finger

than for William's whole heart."

CHAPTER XI.

The morning after Mr. Douglas' funeral broke clear and beautiful, but its freshness charmed only the guests at the villa into early rising. The family, as represented by Kathleen, William, and Maxwell, either had coffee in their rooms or were too late to make a social meal with the half-dozen friends who remained. Doctor Harper was up and about, but he was so busy trying to obtain a private interview with Kathleen that the bishop found him anything but sociable.

That young lady herself had not closed her eyes all night. She was not sure whether excitement kept her awake in spite of herself, or whether she deliberately refused to lose for a moment the conscious realization of her happiness. It was so pleasant to have a great blank stretch of night in which to live it all over once again, to recall every word and look and admission, to tell herself the greatest good the world can give was hers.

Even Maxwell, the most normal of beings, was too busy with his hopes and plans to fall asleep till the dawn was looking into his windows. He would be married in August-surely Kathleen would not ask for a longer delay-and he would take a holiday from business and show her the beautiful things in her own country. In the winter they would live in New York, and their summers should be spent at the island, and so on and on in a riotous continuance of youth and health and money. And why not? You and I would make just such plans if we could!

As for William, he went straight to Mr. Dix's room after his interview with Stella, to talk over the situation resulting from the loss of the will, and to get some idea of Kathleen's chance of success if she chose to dispute the will which was to be read in the morning. Question after question assailed Mr. Dix's sleepy ears, until William felt himself master of all that the lawyer could suggest. The latter strongly advised a compromise with Miss Fitz-

gerald, based upon the yearly cost of maintaining the property already hers by direct gift, and William, who had all the account books in his own study, finally took himself off and spent the rest of the night in calculations of how cheaply the place could be kept up, and in preparing a statement to lay before his cousin immediately after the reading of the old will.

When Nancy came to call her young lady at the usual time, she found her already awake, lying back among her pillows, her hands clasped under her curly head, and her eyes shining like stars. Nancy knew why they were shining, for Kathleen had told her before she went to bed, and had been kissed and blessed and hugged, and finally scolded because she had spoiled her new crape in the night dew.

The old woman stood at the foot of the bed rejoicing in the girl's happiness.

"Do you know what I've been praying, dearie?" she asked, while an unshed tear made her wink violently. "I prayed that them that's gone might hear the good news that you and Mr. Maxwell's going to be married. My, wouldn't it tickle your grandfather!" she added, switching her ideas from heaven to earth.

"I am sure it would have made him happy," said Kathleen softly; "and as for me, I feel as if I had been nearly to heaven, for my spirit has been floating on clouds of happiness all night long."

Nancy, who felt that the conversation was becoming a trifle too highflown for her fancy, bustled about, preparing the girl's bath and toilet, and then she ordered her out of bed with the hectoring manner that had become second nature.

"Now, you get right up, Miss Kathleen," she commanded, "for Doctor Harper has sent twice to know whether he can speak to you, and maybe it's lawyer's business he wants to talk about; for me and Bond and cook has all been noticed to come to the liberry at two o'clock, and I guess you'll be wanted, too."

Doctor Harper came to the boudoir simultaneously with Kathleen's break-

fast trav.

"My dear child," he said, "you are placed in a very awkward position. You have this great establishment on your hands and not a cent to run it with. Consider the grounds, consider the servants, consider the food! Now, there are just two things to do. Sell it out and out to one of your cousins, or borrow the money to carry you along till you can apply to the courts to have the old will set aside and your claims on the estate recognized. Your case is a very strong one."

"I shall probably borrow——" she began, meaning to say "from Maxwell," when he interrupted her.

"And take the chances!" he said, laughing, "Women are born gamblers. But I respect your spirit. I shouldn't sell, in your place; indeed, this is the point I came to talk to you about. I am not a poor man—rather the reverse—and I shall be proud to be your banker until such time as you no longer need assistance."

His kind face was flushed with the effort of saying what he feared might offend, but he got still pinker when she came over to his chair, and, putting her hands on his shoulders, deliberately

kissed him on both cheeks.

"You dearest of friends," she said, "I should like to take your money, for the pleasure of feeling still more deeply in debt to your kindness, but there is no necessity. Maxwell and I are going to be married very soon, and he must assume the charge of his wife's dower before we are married instead of after. I hope that doesn't shock you; it seems

plain common sense to me."

Maxwell interrupted William's breakfast of strong coffee and a cigarette to tell him of his engagement, and though William congratulated him in well-chosen phrases, Max received an impression of coldness—or was it preoccupation? He rather inclined to the latter, because when William joined the assembled family in the library, for the reading of the will, he came directly up to Kathleen and took both her hands

and wished her joy. Max thought his manner quite charming, and was a little disappointed that Kathleen did not

respond more warmly.

As the clock struck ten Doctor Harper brought his chair close to Kathleen, who sat by the window. Maxwell sat on her other side, while William, who always posed as master of ceremonies, made a clear space on the writing-table for Mr. Dix's papers, and conducted that gentleman to his seat, after which he admitted the upper servants, who were mentioned by name in the will.

Just before Mr. Dix unfolded the document, William once more crossed the room, and, putting his head out of the door, gave his final orders to a footman he had stationed there.

"Chalmers," he said, "on no account allow any interruption. I do not wish to see any one, or to be called to the telephone, or to receive any despatches.

Such things must wait."

Having locked the door, he returned to his place on the right of the lawyer, and by a courteous inclination of his head intimated that the reading might begin.

Mr. Dix made a brief statement of facts that everybody knew, and then

read:

I, James Douglas, of Isola Bella, Lake Limpid, St. Hubert's County, in the State of New York, do, with the intent of making a just disposition of my property at my death, make, publish, and declare this to be my last will and testament.

First—I direct that I shall be buried beside my deceased wife in the plot of ground

I have reserved for the purpose.

Second—I give to my dear friend and physician, Henry Harper, of the city of New York, the sum of fifty thousand dollars as an expression of my gratitude for his unfailing kindness.

Third-I--

At this point a hubbub arose in the hall that caused William to start to his feet with a look of anger, and Mr. Dix to lay down the will with a gesture of protest.

The clamor of words was soon lost in vigorous thumps on the locked door, and Stella Fane's voice called loudly: "I must come in! Open the door at once."

William addressed the company:

"This young woman is out of her head, I believe—the result of the tragedy she has just passed through in the storm; it would be unwise to admit her."

Possibly she heard him, for she be-

gan shouting for Mr. Scott.

"Let me in, Mr. Scott!" she cried.
"I have the lost will—truly, I have."

William got a dusky red and sank back in his chair, while Mr. Dix observed with polite firmness:

"I do not think we can ignore her

statement."

As William remained immovable, Maxwell took it upon himself to unlock the door and admit Stella, with the satchel which every one present recognized as Mr. Bromley's. She car-

ried it to Mr. Dix, saying:

"Mr. Bromley asked me to keep this bag under my waterproof cloak when we were getting so wet in the boat—he said it had sandwiches in it that Bond had given him when he had to hurry away from the lunch-table. I threw it aside with my waterproof when I got home, and never thought of it again till this morning, when I suddenly remembered about the sandwiches, and when I opened the bag to throw them away, I saw it was full of papers—one marked 'The Will of James Douglas.' Isn't it a mercy I found it?"

Mr. Dix was too much occupied in going over the contents of the satchel to pay much attention to Stella's longwinded explanation, but Nancy whis-

pered audibly to Bond:

"The play-actin' minx! It's my opinion she was holdin' back them papers for some diviltry of her own, and she's givin' them up now for the same

reason."

Mr. Dix glanced rapidly through the new will; it was extremely short, and has already been referred to by Mr. Douglas himself in the conversation he had with Kathleen in the library shortly before his death. Briefly stated, it gave to his granddaughter one half of all he possessed, in addition to the

island property already hers, and to his nephews the other half, to be equally divided between them, after first pay-

ing the legacies.

When Mr. Dix finally read it aloud, there was a great flutter in the room. William exclaimed: "I consider this a gross injustice," and walked to the window, where he stood with his back to the company.

Doctor Harper was in ecstasies. Nancy forgot her legacy of ten thousand dollars in her joy at Kathleen's riches, and Maxwell, smiling tenderly,

whispered:

"Fate means me to accept my fortune from my wife."

But Kathleen answered:

"If grandpapa had known we were going to marry and unite our fortunes, he would have left more to William. Let us make it good to him, dear Maxwell."

And, seeing approval in his face, she went quickly up to William and laid

her hand on his arm.

"The island must always be your home, William," she said, "just as much as Maxwell's and mine; and as for our getting so much more than you, we do not mean to keep it; we will all share and share alike, and prove to the world that one family can divide an inheritance without a quarrel."

William, who had been plotting and scheming, felt suddenly ashamed. He tried to answer, but her simple kindness made a lump come in his throat, and, finding speech impossible, he kissed her hand and then hurriedly left the

room.

Stella Fane swept over to Kathleen. "I am very glad I was able to do you such a service as finding that will," she said, with her thick-skinned conceit. "I am going to New York to-night to sign a contract to sing in grand opera. I hope before very long to make my mark in the world."

Kathleen smiled indulgently.

"I am sure," she replied, "that we shall all be proud of our lakeside prima donna."

But Nancy said: "Humph!"

The GLOVE STAKES W. A. Fraser



IGHT riders galloping on the parapet of eternity; seven men, beckoned by the hand of fate truant in a lady's glove, and the silent horseman: that

was the "Glove Stakes"—the "extra" at the Belmont Hunt Race meet. It was Kathleen Braund's proposing, and fate's dis-

posing.

The Braund acres, lying broad and many about the old manor, "Twin Elms," stretched away in luxuriant verdure and the golden drape of grainfields to the bordering lands that had been Patriek Raeburn's. Raeburn the elder had toyed with the gods of chance with fatuous insistence to the end that there had come an intermission in the ownership of Killahoe; and James, the son, had started out in life capitalized only by his inheritance of the gambling taint.

Perhaps fate had tired of his surly mood; perhaps Dame Fortune liked the happy, smiling, Irish face of the younger Raeburn; perhaps the youth's clearcut decision had something to do with it; however that may be, Jim Raeburn had steadily drained from the racecourse a little stream of gold, and now "Killahoe" knew a Raeburn again. In the rich pasture-fields thoroughbreds begot thoroughbreds, and, like all else that the lord of the manor touched, profit accrued.

Belmont County was a land of horse and horsemen; and the Belmont Hunt

-well, it was a hunt.

The week of the race meet, quite appropriately, the play "Caruth Hall," splendidly begilt with red coats and velvet caps and knock-kneed horses,

eventuated in the little theater of Belmont town. Nobody knew that Raeburn owned the company, lock, stock, and barrel-or, rather, coat, cap, and horse; but he did. The characteristic of Raeburn's way of going was secrecy, which is highly commendable on the turf.

In the stage hunt, the master of hounds, Lord Caruth, was Banfield Leigh, whose chief qualification for the leading part was that Raeburn admired him as he did a stake-horse, which was regard in excelsis. Leigh was a gentleman; not only because his pater, like Raeburn's, had had money and lost it, and had schooled Banfield only in the gentle art of doing nothing gracefully, but because he was thoroughbredwind, limb, and brain.

Now we come to the night Kathleen Braund, Fenner, Barry, and two others sat in a box trying to follow the tortuous plot of Lord Caruth's wondrous career. Fenner was an egoist, an egotist, a prig-he was many more disquieting things; and, being all this, his worst sin was an insistent attention to the young mistress of Twin Elms.

Banfield could look the part of Lord Caruth, or Lord Anybody, for he was handsome—tall, lithe, and supple as an Indian. And Kathleen, imaginative, susceptible, as the big violet-gray eyes proclaimed, grew blind to the incongruity of the cheap play, and, after a little. Fenner, with jealous intuition, felt the presence of an annoying influence, and, unwisely, grew brutally captious. It was the egoist's evil destiny that Raeburn should have come into the box, to sit through his sneering arraignment of the make-believe M. F. H. and his knee-scarred hunter.

Raeburn, listening, knew that Fenner

ought to be punished for his own sake; and in the violet eyes that had darkened to ultramarine he read that the man ought to be punished for the girl's sake. So, in his room that night, he drove his mind along the tortuous trail of Fenner's gratuitous affronts, which was altogether unlucky for the captious one; and the next morning he went to Twin Elms with anger in his hot Irish heart, and a plan in his cool American

He smiled inwardly when talk of the play, which he started, passed prematurely into an admiring eulogy of Lord Caruth. Then he knew he was on safe ground, and said: "Miss Kathleen, your friend Fenner is considerably

a bore, isn't he?"

"He was uncomfortably facetious last evening."

"Generously rude. He ought to be punished-don't you think so?"

"I haven't thought about it-I never do, about Fenner. It would be a life's work for somebody to take up.'

"I'll take it up gladly if you'll help

-for a day."

"Why-how? Why worry? It doesn't

matter."

"He poked stupid fun at Banfield Leigh. Leigh's a gentleman"—the fugitive flush that faintly rosed the girl's neck and cheek was not too shortlived for the speaker's sharp eye—"and, worse-I mean also-he sneered at Smuggler."

"Who is Smuggler-the villain of

the play, or the bailiff?"

"Smuggler is Leigh's hunter. Here, Miss Kathleen, I'll tell you all about it. There's sport ahead, I can promise you. Smuggler is my horse-

"Your horse?"

"Oh, I forgot. The whole outfit is mine-yes, I'm fairy godfather to that melodramatic entanglement. I'm a theatrical promoter. I don't know anything about the profession, and neither do they, but that doesn't matter, we're having a lot of fun out of it; and—well, I like Leigh. He's not a bad actor-I've seen worse-though Booth's fame is safe."

"This grows interesting, Mr. Rae-

burn. Mr. Leigh certainly is a gentlemanly actor, anyway."

"Yes, and he can ride; and that beast Fenner said Leigh sat his horse like a tailor. I'm going to tell you a secret. Oh, don't expostulate: I don't need it as a secret now, or I wouldn't tell you -any woman, I mean."

"Thanks, from all of us."

"Smuggler is a rare steeplechase horse-or he was till he broke his knees. He jumped so well that he grew overconfident-understand?"

"Yes, I know; Black Diamond is like that. He has got to skimming his

jumps till he is unsafe."

"Well, Smuggler hit the rails once too often, and came down with his knees on a granite monument or something, and cracked them. I've nursed him for over a year; stuck him in that play just to keep him from moping; he's got brains-he's like a human. He's all right now-I was saving him for a big coup, I don't mind telling you; and that-that-"

"Mr. Fenner?"

"Yes, that called Smuggler-the best steeplechaser I ever owned-a brokendown cab-horse; and-" Raeburn broke off and clenched his fist at an invisible enemy.

"Well?"

"The coup is off, that's all. Your hunt meet commences to-morrow, and if you'll make a social hour for the hunt chaps and invite Leigh and mewhy couldn't we make an extra racea special?"

"I see; for the undoing of the critical

one, eh?"

Raeburn nodded eagerly, saying: "It will be easy; I'll put Barry up to draw Fenner to disparage what he styled last night the equine bric-à-brac at Caruth

"Mr. Fenner has a very good hunter, Firefly; do you think Smuggler up to beating anything we have here? Because, if we made a race, and Fenner won-you don't know what he really is like-we'd simply have to sell off the hounds and abolish the hunt. He can ride, too, though, for the sake of content, there is a sworn compact in the

club never to admit this."

"Smuggler can beat Firefly or Wasp, or any other ornithological quadruped Fenner owns; and Leigh can outride him. Smuggler is fit, too—fit enough; and his class will more than make up any little difference in condition. He's been galloped regularly—long, slow work, of course—by the boy who looks after him; besides, Leigh rides him a great deal, so he's had plenty of work."

"Mr. Leigh knows, then, about

Smuggler's qualities?"
"Not a bit of it. I don't work a coup by telling everybody what I've got. Smuggler broke down before he advertised himself to the public, and I sha'n't tell Leigh of the horse's quality till he is in for the race. I want to try

out his nerve.'

"I like it; it sounds like those impossible racing stories I've read in the magazines, where the horses and the people all play into each other's hands. I'll do the social, and you the horse part. You want me to write a note in-

viting Mr. Leigh, I suppose?"

"Make it a man affair," Raeburn added. "D. O., demi-official, to drink tea and arrange about the hunt races. If you had women, they wouldn't give us a chance to pit Leigh and Fenner together; they'd mob the boy—they always do. He's handsome off the stage."

As Raeburn left Twin Elms he chuckled. "Two birds with one barrel," he muttered. "Mr. Critic will get the surprise of his life, and Kathie—she's too good for such a creature—she'll—well, I won't say what will happen—I hope it does. I like the boy; he's like

herself-a thoroughbred."

Kathleen sent a horseman about with an invitation that was like a summons, and when Raeburn and Leigh arrived at Twin Elms, on the stroke of four, there were a dozen men of the Belmont Hunt in the drawing-room. As Raeburn drew Leigh toward the corner of the room where Kathleen was holding a little court, he said: "Keep your temper, Leigh, if that sallow, hawkfaced individual beside Miss Braund

says stupid things. It's his way, and he's a bit jealous. Just leave his punishment to others—he'll get it."

"Ah, Mr. Leigh, so good of Mr. Raeburn to bring you," the girl welcomed, and the violet eyes made stronger the greeting. "Now we'll have something besides horse to talk about. Sit beside me."

But presently she rose, and, slipping her hand through the arm of Barry, said: "Come with me. I want you."

"At last!"

"No, not yet, that way." She drew

him into a recessed window.

"What's the game, Kathleen?" he asked. "Raeburn looks as mysterious! There's something up—what is it?"

"You love me, Barry, don't you?"
"If I say yes, you won't believe me—you never do; if I say no, you'll know it's a lie."

"Don't be stupid; I want you to prove

"That I'm stupid?"

"You have; that you love me. Fenner was beastly last night."

"He's such a natural chap-never

hides anything."

"Well, we've got to put him through a kindergarten course in manners; Raeburn thinks so, so do I. You're to make the running, Barry. Draw him; give him a chance to be witty—over the play, you know; that horse, and Mr. Leigh yonder. It's all Raeburn's idea." This explanation was an answer to a quizzical gleam in Barry's blue eyes. "Then start the idea of an extra race, keep Fenner going. He's sure to corner Mr. Leigh to enter his stage hunter. He had some wretched joke last night that it was a saw-horse. Oh, he is witty, Barry! Now, come."

"I don't understand it, Kathleen," Barry complained, wrinkling his brows as they moved toward the men. "Who's the joke on? What chance will the stage horse have against Firefly if we

make a race for them?"

"Do your part, Barry, and leave it

to the gods.

"And the Lady of the Silver Veil."
As they joined the group, Leonard, of the hunt, was saying: "We're shy

of horses, and fellows, too, by Jove! Half the Padoug Hunt chaps have gone down to Brookline to back that crazy rack of bones, Topsail, in the International. The Foxglove Annual has fallen through; it had bad conditions, anyway."

"Have to make up another race to take its place," Barry suggested casu-

ally.

"Where are the horses to come from?" Stanton asked in objection to this.

"Change the conditions—throw it open to anything. There are no fliers coming to Belmont."

"We're shy of riders, too," Fenton

wailed.

"Mr. Leigh might take a mount," Kathleen lisped tentatively; "that

would be one more."

"Capital!" exclaimed Fenner, who had been watching for an opening. "Mr. Leigh might also enter that chestnut of his; he'd qualify, regularly ridden to hounds in the Caruth Hunt."

The girl smiled. It was lovely, the ready rise to the bait. Barry laughed

outright, maliciously.

Leigh colored, his smooth face showing stronger under the brick red.

And Fenner, not knowing, returned

cheerfully to the attack:

"I should say he was a safe sort of beast, that hunter of yours, Mr. Leigh; no nonsense about him—go straight as an arrow."

Raeburn smiled indulgently. "You have a good eye for a hunter, Fenner," he drawled approvingly; "the chestnut is as fine a made one as I've seen for many a day. I shouldn't be afraid to bet a thousand he's seen the real thing in his time. He looks it. Have you ever put him over the jumps, Leigh? He takes the bars on the stage like a cat."

Kathleen had most esoterically come by a paper and pencil, and she said: "We'd better arrange this race at once. Who'll enter—who'll ride—what's it to be? An extra to take the place of the Foxbrook Annual, not filled? What's it to be? Distance, weights, and all, first."

The girl's earnestness spurred the men to eager suggestion. Every one contributed.

Kathleen wrote rapidly, filtering the buzz of miles, pounds, conditions, simplifying the interminable mass. "Listen!" then aloud she read: "A steeplechase for horses owned by members of the Belmont Hunt and—" she hesitated, her eyes had wandered toward Leigh; they ran cognizantly over his lean, sinewy figure—"and members of the learned professions; catch weights over one hundred and sixty pounds; two miles."

"Oh, Augustus!" muttered Barry.
"If that isn't clever! I'll bet Leigh
can scale it, and Fenner can't ride under one hundred and seventy to save
his neck." Aloud he queried: "What

do we run for?"

"That's so," added Raeburn. "Who

donates-what's the prize?"

"We must make the stakes worth while," came with Fenner's disagreeable voice. "Mr. Leigh's horse, I suppose, draws a large salary, doesn't he? He can't take a chance of breaking a

leg for nothing."

Leigh had a strong temptation to reach over and tweak Fenner's nose, but even the angry retort that rose to his lips was checked by the girl's voice saying: "This is to be an affair of chivalry. Belmont is many hundreds of years behind, so this is tournament days. You knights shall ride for My Lady's Glove—I donate it—the Glove Stakes."

"My best horse, Oregon," exclaimed Barry; "I'll win that glove or—"

"If you beat Bluepoint," interrupted Stanton.

"Wait, please," Kathleen pleaded; "I shall get the sentiment and the boasting and the horses all mixed. Now—Firefly, Mr. Fenner?"

He nodded eagerly.

As the girl's slim, tapered fingers limned the outline of the plot, the men, enthused, made entry with clamor—all but Banfield Leigh, who sat silent in astonished, sullen anger. He was evidently being baited; and it was altogether execrable form, or else he had

lost all bearings as to what constituted sport or good breeding. He was like a captive among brigands, about to be made to dance for their amusement. But Raeburn! That was the confusing part of it-that Raeburn, his friend, was one of the insistents. If he had not been there, Leigh would have flung himself from Twin Elms without the grace of a farewell-indeed, with an imprecation on his lips.

"Now, Mr. Leigh, your horse?"

It was the soft voice Leigh had linked so pleasantly with the violetgray eyes. Yes, they had looked thoroughbred; but if their owner was not heartless-well, she was lacking in other qualities equally desirable.

"It would be nonsense," he objected.

"My horse, Dick—".
"Dick?" Fenner reechoed the name in a voice that might be interpreted to

mean anything of derision.

"That name won't do at all," Raeburn declared-"not for a classy race like the Glove Stakes. Enter him as -as-Smuggler, Miss Kathleen; that's

his name. I'll be bound."

The violet eyes drooped over the paper, and only the name-horses saw the malicious merriment that ran riot in "It's delicious," she their depths. whispered to her pencil. "Poor chap -I mean Fenner. There, gentlemen, she cried, passing the entry-list to

The men crowded around him and

saw:

THE GLOVE STAKES.

A Steeplechase for horses owned by members of the Belmont Hunt and the Learned Professions. For a Lady's Glove. Catch weights over 160 lbs. Two miles.

1. Mr. Barry's Oregon.

Blue, White Cap.

Mr. Fenner's Firefly.

Cerise. Mr. Stanton's Bluepoint. Magpie.

4. Mr. Leonard's Tally-Ho. Old Gold.

Mr. Stewart's Mars. Silver Gray. Mr. Louden's Red Rose.

Green, Black Sleeves. Mr. Leigh's Smuggler.

"By Jove!" cried Barry. "That'll

make a corking fine race. What are your colors, Leigh? There's none here."

"Leigh will ride in my jacket-crimson and black cap," volunteered Rae-

"To be run the last day, Saturday," Kathleen added; "that will give Mr. Leigh a chance to school his horse."

"I can't make one hundred and sixty," growled Fenner; "I can't ride a pound under one hundred and seventy."

"You've got to waste or carry overweight, that's all, then," Barry declared. "I can't make it, either. Firefly ought to be handicapped at one hundred and eighty, anyway. For my part, I'm going to get down light-I'll live on cream-puffs between now and Saturday to win Miss Kathleen's glove."

In reality, the raison d'être of the afternoon tea had been realized, so soon the broad avenue, with its double file of soldier elms, echoed to the grinding whirr of wheels, and the metaled tramp of eager hunters. As Raeburn and Leigh bowled along in the master of Killahoe's trap, the younger man said: "It's all devilish fine-damn funny, I must say—but I tell you this, Raeburn-it's not startlingly original, but it's trite to the occasion-you can lead a horse to water, but you can't make him drink."

"Trite as related to anything in par-

ticular?"

"Yes, that I don't play the goat Saturday, and I won't play the inhuman with old Dick by giving him the chance to crack a leg. What the devil does it all mean, anyway? The laugh was on me, of course, but why? That's what I want to know—why?"

The master of Killahoe looked quizzically at the flushed, angry face of his companion. "My dear boy," he said presently, "you've got the loveliest chance! Heavens! It's glorious. That girl's all in, I tell you; you're a three to five chance."

"In the race?"

"Yes, even in the race, but I meant something else. Let me tell youyou've got to know, of course. Smuggler, if it weren't for those knees, would now be the best steeplechase horse in America. He's that now, because the knees are all right again, only he'd need six months' schooling to beat the cracks; but he can win from these hunters or I'll eat crow."

"Does Miss Braund know this?"

"Of course she does. Together we've cooked this little business to trim that objectionable cuss, Fenner. And from now on everything rests with you, and I'll back you to make good. When you've won that glove, you'll have landed one of the biggest stakes ever ridden for in this country. I know what Kathleen Braund is-she's a Braund, and they're all alike, thoroughbred. You've got four days to show Smuggler the Belmont course. needn't worry over his jumping; he knows every trick of the game. Just lift him a bit at the mud walls; he likes to race over them-jumps too close."

As the horses were being saddled for the Glove Stakes Saturday, Kathleen stood beside Raeburn, looking at Smuggler. Somehow, the two, rider and horse, made up a picture that sent the girl's eager blood galloping. sun drew little rainbows of bronze and green and purple from the vein-mapped satin skin of the big chestnut; and the perfume of the clovered inner field, the indefinable scent of battle that was in the soft summer air, wafted through the big, thin, coral-lined nostrils of the blooded horse, and roused his racing spirit, ennobling him into a dream of equine beauty.

As the girl looked, she understood why Raeburn had said that Smuggler was one of the grandest horses he had ever owned. Surely it was in those powerful loins, the great quarters, and the sweet-lined neck to gallop so strong that the humiliation of Firefly and his owner was assured. And as she passed her small gloved hand down the seal-brown neck, the horse turned his lean, bony head and snuggled her shoulder with a gentle pressure of his lips.

"What an eye, Miss Kathleen!" Raeburn cried, in the voice of a horse lover. "Isn't that courage for you? And wise—he knows more than a great many men, I can tell you."

Just beyond, talking to Smuggler's

boy, was Banfield Leigh,

The girl felt that some strange necromancy must have transformed everything into a complement of beauty lines. How wide and square the shoulders looked under the crimson silk; how the limbs tapered in the riding gear, fined down in lines of suppleness and strength. And beneath the black cap, the clear-cut face was like an eager, confidant bov's.

Yes, surely these two actors in the little drama plot would play their part

well, whatever happened.

"Ah, now they're going to mount!"
Raeburn cried, and as Leigh swung
himself leisurely into the saddle on the
strong-backed chestnut, the girl said:
"My good wishes, Mr. Leigh." He
smiled in happy gratefulness, and when
his face was turned toward the course
she flicked Smuggler's quarter with the
glove of desire—just a foolish touch
for luck.

Raeburn walked on at Leigh's stirrup, saying: "Watch that beast on Firefly; I know what he's like. If he thinks you can beat him, he'll try to bring you down. Keep clear of him. Smuggler can stay forever, so don't be

in a hurry."

As Fenner passed Kathleen, he checked Firefly, and, bending down, with an ugly look in his eyes, said: "This was to have been a gentlemen's race, but now it's the best man wins. Oh, I'll give them enough of it! I'll come for the glove; the actor will find he's not on the stage."

He was crowded past by Barry call-

ing to him to go on.

"Barry," the girl whispered, "Fenner's ugly; don't let him bring on any accident."

"I'll put him over a wall if he cuts up! Never fear, Kathleen; I'll watch the sweep. I'm still in this game to draw Fenner, Kathleen. I know I'm not in it to win, but I don't mind. I'll race Firefly off his legs for a mile; I'll make the pace so hot that he'll

be staggering the second time round. Firefly is high-strung-he'll want to race. If Fenner attempts to take him back, he'll sulk and blunder. I know -so does Fenner."

"You do love me, Barry; you've proved it," the girl answered. "I'll be a sister to you."

From the stand, sitting beside Raeburn, Kathleen watched the splash of color that was like a great square of tapestry let into the green background of the course. The horses were at the upper turn for the start. A crimson dot claimed her eye always. How quiescently restful it was in that irritating. ever-changing woof of green and blue and old gold, that wove in and out interminably.

watching through his Raeburn. glasses, kept up a monologue. Fenner's an exquisite beast! That would have been a good start, but he calmly swung Firefly about, just to rattle Leigh; cannoned into Smuggler, too. He is a beast! There they go! The only way they'd ever get off—Fenner in front. He's just a cheap

jockey!"

A horn sounded on the lawn; a yellow flag fluttered to the turf just in front of the rushing charge of eager horses; there was a shuffling of feet in the stand; the air came up off the course carrying soft symbols of struggle as though it felt the press of straining muscles against its back.

As the big chestnut, swinging along in easy stride, took the first mud wall as though it were a shadow across his path, Raeburn looked at the girl with "He'll a smile in his eyes, and said:

do! Isn't he a great one!"

"But he struck! It was too close!" The girl's voice carried a wail of apprehension. Across at the mud wall. where Smuggler had skimmed its top. a cloud of dust rose in the air like a puff of rifle smoke. Raeburn looked curiously at the drawn face of the girl. and as he turned to the field again he muttered: "Gad! She's harder hit than the mud wall."

Down the back they raced with the speed of horses that strove on the flat,

Barry driving at Oregon, drawing the high-metaled Firefly into foolish haste. In vain Fenner soothed at the bay with gentle restraint of the rein-he dared not do more; strong-checked, Firefly, rattled, would surely blunder at his

Out in front the two swept around the lower turn, and up the greenswarded course toward the stand the seven horses, eager of strife, thundered, their hoofs rolling from the turf a merry tattoo, the green and crimson and magpie and blue silks colored against the somber background of the distant trees like a memorial window in some vast cathedral. Now the leaders, Firefly and Oregon, were abreast the stand: now they gathered their loins to fly the water jump.

"Fenner's over! That Firefly is a good horse. And Barry, too,"

burn drawled. "Ah-h-h!"

The "Ah" ran through the stand as though it were a living thing that shivered in apprehension, as Red Rose, jumping short, reeled, shot downward shoulder first, blotting Loudon, her rider, from view. But a sigh of relief went up as something in green, draggled and wet, sprawled drunkenly from the ditch. Loudon was alive.

Almost at the mare's heels Smuggler, with lean, far-stretched neck and ears pricked inquisitively, gathered mighty muscles, crouched; then, rising, his knees well clear of the hedge, shot forward and landed many feet clear of the water that lay like a huge flat mir-

ror in the greensward.

"That'll do for riding," Raeburn said, if iov in his voice. "Did you see soft joy in his voice. Leigh ease his weight from the horse's quarters, and crouch over the wither? When they landed he wouldn't have crushed an egg in the saddle. He'll do!"

On the upper turn Fenner failed to steady Firefly, and Oregon shot across to the inside. Barry's blue jacket blotted out the cerise for a moment, then flickered derisively in front.

Down the backstretch, like a yacht's pennant, floated the parti-colored silk streamer-Barry's blue, then Fenner's

cerise, the checkered magpie of Stanton, and, trailing the others, a splash of crimson that was Smuggler. The great chestnut's slender ears were pricked in the happy content of conscious power, for on his rein rested a hand as light as a woman's. rhythmic swing of the smooth-galloping horse beneath him filled Leigh's heart with joy. Never had he sat such a horse-never. Down the reach of the backstretch Leigh waited, nursing Smuggler clear of the scramble, saving him from the hurrying jostle that was in front.

Just before the lower turn Firefly and Oregon took the first jump of the in-and-out together, and blue and cerise blended as one. As they rose for the second, Oregon hung, wavered, a cloud of dust almost hiding the horse.

"Fenner crowded Barry," Raeburn "He's down! No, he's not. Good! My God! something else gone. Smuggler's in on top of them-they'll bring him down!"

The dust thickened as a bank of fog. and the in-and-out lay like a hidden animal trap. Kathleen held her breath, her eyes strained on a blotch of color that lay quiescent on the grass; her hand clutched at Raeburn's arm. "Who's down-oh, my God! who's down?"

"Leonard. There goes Tally-Ho riderless; poor Leonard's out of it! Smuggler's all right. See him come!" Raeburn's voice was a squeal of unholy triumph-selfish, indifferent, claiming interest in nothing but the big chest-

Then, sobered, the two sat silent, and up the course, for the last round, came the bay horse Firefly, still in the lead. At his heels Barry urged Oregon, cursing the man who had tried to bring him down at the in-and-out. Just behind Mars and Bluepoint raced Smuggler, with his long, swinging stride. With a weary lurch as he galloped, Bluepoint crossed his legs on the flat and fell, shooting Stanton under the very nose of Smuggler. The stand held its breath and shuddered. Women closed their eyes, hiding them with their hands. But the chestnut lifted over the sprawled man as though he took a low wall in his stride, and a chorus of praise

vibrated the air.

And now Leigh drove his horse, and Smuggler spread his muscles till the turf floated by, a smooth sea, a manyacred mantle of green velvet. Leigh knew that he must pass Mars, who was rolling groggily in his gallop, before he reached the water jump, or the tired horse might bring him down. Smuggler was clear of Mars, and at Oregon's quarter; now Leigh raced shoulder to shoulder with Barry; and in front beckoned the cerise jacket of Fenner.

"Go on, Leigh!" Barry panted. "I'm done! My mount's-dead beat."

Fenner heard the pound of eager hoofs. He shot a look backward, and saw the golden head of the horse he had jeered at. He swung at Firefly with arm and knee, he drove his spurs; into the bay's flank; but inch by inch the chestnut head thrust forward till it was at his girth. Fenner was a horseman; he knew that another furlong at that pace and Firefly would crack up, and there was over half-amile to go.

"Curse that lumbering chestnut!" he

muttered. "I'm beat."

Just ahead, a dozen strides, the brushed rail of the water jump showed, and the angled, guarding wing. A small devil whispered: "Put the chestnut over the wing. All's fair in love and war. You're beat, you're beat, you're beat!"

The drumming hoofs of the chestnut thundered the dreary monotone: "You're beat! You're beat!

beat!"

Fenner's shoulders swung low over the bay's withers, his right hand hung heavily on the rein, and Firefly, boring to the right, blotted from Leigh's eyes the jump-guarding hedge till he saw only the white rails of the wing, and they were two lengths away. out-give me a chance!" he yelled; and Barry, a length behind, saw the deviltry afoot, and drove at Oregon.

A stride; too late to pull back-a

fall is inevitable! Leigh will be put over the wing and out of the race!

A fury of strength made strong his heart. If fall he must, they would come down together; he would bring down Fenner.

As the head of Firefly rose in the air for the jump, Leigh, with a drive of the spur and a swing of his arms, lifted the chestnut and swung him full at the bay. Down they go, cerise and crimson, like splashes of spurting blood; bay horse and chestnut brought to earth like fighting stags.

And Oregon, with a lift from Barry, swerved to the left and landed clear.

The stand echoed a moan that was a

smothered cry of fright.

"Hurrah, they're up!" somebody yelled, in an exultant tone of relief, as the bay struggled to the grass, dragging his rider. Now Fenner, one foot in the stirrup, pulls drunkenly at the rein, and Firefly spins around in a circle. Leigh has been thrown clear; the chestnut struggles to his feet, plunges, is off. Just in time! Barry, who had pulled up Oregon, grasps Smuggler's reins. Leigh is in the saddle; Fenner is up. "Hurrah!" shakes the stand in a roar of applause.

Down the backstretch, bay and chestnut and gray, the three race; cerise and crimson and blue sitting atop. Over the two jumps of the in-and-out the trinity of color undulates, the cerise first. Firefly is surely drawing away; he has a length the best of it. Into the stretch they come, and it is a race. Even there on the turns Leigh has nursed the chestnut in wisdom; now he calls: "On, boy, on!" He lifts the horse with his knees-he gains.

The golden chestnut and the bronze

bay now blur into one.
The stand shouts: "Smuggler wins!

Firefly wins!"

It is anybody's race. The turmoil in the stand dies away, the tongues are hushed; the fierce struggle between bay and chestnut has silenced the clamor.

Smuggler's head, lean, eager, blackwet, pushes past the bay's quarter, past his girth, past his shoulder; they take each other's breath. Fenner's whiphand falls useless at his side-the chestnut blocks the sweep of his lash. A dozen strides, a last effort; then Raeburn, slipping his glasses into their leather case, turned to Kathleen with a sigh of relief: "Gad! it was a close thing, but we won. Hasn't the boy got nerve? Didn't he ride?"

And presently a man in a crimson jacket came across the lawn from the judge's stand, and over his face, still drawn from the grasp of strife, flitted a happy smile as the girl, looking into the tired face out of deep violet eyes, gave him a glove that was crumpled and twisted out of all semblance to a

gage of love.



HOW PITIFUL 'TWOULD BE

OW pitiful 'twere if when one Fair rose had blown The bush should droop, its bearing done, Its vigor flown.

How pitiful 'twould be if when We love and lose We might not find the way again That Love pursues. S. E. KISER.





USY felt the intellectual plenitude which the reading of a story she liked always gave her. They — meaning the elders, who were like armed opponents, always forbidding the

nice things—had sent her to solitude in the library on this beautiful spring day, to meditate on her imperfections, and instead she had had opportunity to secretly revel in twenty-seven fairy stories. A crude Machiavellism had always kept her from betraying that banishment to the library had compensations exactly suiting a contemplative mood.

The book was returned to its place on the shelf, and she assumed a penitential attitude in a corner, her knees raised, her elbows on them, her round, hard, excited cheeks gripped in her hands. She loved all the stories, but, because she saw its possible practical application, her thoughts dwelt most tenderly on that one of the fairy who gave the old man and his wife three wishes.

Oh, if a fairy would only come to her and give her three wishes, what marvelous changes she would make in her unsatisfactory existence! Her heart began to beat very fast. You would never get what you wanted if you just sat still without "making a try" for it—she had noticed that. Her body grew rigid, she dropped her face to her knees, and began a vehement, muttered prayer:

"Oh, fairies, please do come to me! I don't ask for the queen—just the littlest fairy will do. Oh, come, and please give me three wishes. Dear fairies, oh, dear fairies, I want a baby!

I want a baby all my own that nobody can take away from me. Then, I'd like an amethyst ring like Emmy Wood's—and I'd like slabs and slabs of that sticky, black fruit-cake packed with raisins and things, so that I can put it away in the attic and go and chop off a chunk whenever I like. But, oh, fairy, if I can have only one wish, then give me a little baby all my own. Come to me—please, please do. I am Susy Gilvarry, No. — Washington Place."

A few moments more of silence and excited heartbeats followed before she lifted her head, her eyes closed. Again she waited, before she shot her lids up to see—perhaps!—a glimmer of silver and gauze and maybe a 'twinkling star on the tip of a wand? No! The redvelvet carpet was bare of any visitor except a lonely fly, twisting its legs distractedly.

Inertia settled on Susy. Was there anything in life? She huddled back in the corner, and began to think of her luncheon. If only there were crullers, that would be *something!*

At luncheon she heard a bit of news that poignantly recalled her unfulfilled wish to her memory.

"Netty Carter has a new sister, children," her mother said.

"A baby!" burst from Susy, and she

grew very pale.
"A baby!" cried Genevieve, feeling that, since Susy was so amazed, amazement was, under the circumstances, the correct thing.

"Another baby, and the twins nearly bran-new," Susy added enviously.

"Yes, they wear caps yet—don't they, Susy?" affirmed Genevieve.

The world seemed an unjust place to Susy Gilvarry that day. She envied Netty, at whose house babies arrived so wonderfully. None had come to the Gilvarry home since she could clearly enjoy its advent. Genevieve, often called "Baby," was six, and did not in the least satisfy Susy's nine-year-old maternal longing. She could not play with Genevieve as if she were a doll, dress and undress her, dip her up and down in a basin of water, feel her soft gums close on her fingers, hold her under the arms and feel her useless feet kick against her, kiss the dimples and the fat, satiny wrists and ankles that overlapped, as if tight strings were tied around them, and-most maddening dream of all !-- she could not carry her around on her arm stripped of all clothes, like the naked baby angels in pictures. If she had a baby of her own. she could do all these things the livelong day, without interruption or criticism.

When the Carter baby was on show, she went to see it, and found it a disappointing experience. It was swaddled in lace and stuff, held on a pillow by a nurse, and under the silk and flannel shielding the" soft, throbbing head, a careworn, crimson face was dimly seen. As she went home she was aware of certain delicate preferences in her maternal taste: she liked her babies harder; particularly when their eyes were wide open, when they crowed, shook rattles, and could be rolled in baby carriages. New babies were a bad investment, after all. She saw now that if the fairies had given her one, she would have had to put it away in some corner until it was not quite so fresh. Above all things, she loved the babycarriage period. Oh, the rapture of propelling the basketlike thing, lifting the front wheel over ruts in the pavement, turning it, directing it, all the time watching the busy, bobbing, live dolly thing in it!

Time was when Susy had loved her afternoon walks in Washington Square because they meant babies. But the nurses had grown tired of her. She had pestered them to let her roll the carriages, and as she would then cover and recover their charges without

pause, take off and put on their caps, awaken them when sleeping to see their eyes or how they looked when they cried, they had formed a Nurses' Trust against her. She was boycotted as a carriage roller. So as babies of all kinds were denied her, and her longing for one grew stronger every day, temptation found her weak when it came, as it did, one summer morning shortly after school had closed for the vacation time. It was a big, dazzling temptation that left her trembling.

She had been forbidden to read the daily papers, and it was not naughtiness, but an overwhelming desire to know, that made her occasionally peep into one in secret to discover the reason of its offensiveness. On this day of drenching summer rain, when she felt very dull, she chanced upon part of a newspaper on the floor of the library. As there was no one present. she ran her finger hastily down the column. It was an advertising sheet, and very stupid reading she found it-people wanting office boys, stenographers. and cooks. But her finger came to a pause at one cry of need that was not stupid-oh, not at all! It was like a silver call from Wonderland, and read in this wise:

Schoolgirl can make one dollar weekly during vacation by rolling baby carriage two hours daily.—S. Cohen, No. — Seventh Avenue.

Susy, breathless, read it a number of times, and then a great light seemed to burst in her head. Evidently fairies could not come face to face with mortals any more, but they had given her her wish this way. They had even been kind enough to place the baby in a familiar neighborhood, for she knew her way to Seventh Avenue, her mother having taken her there several times to a furrier's shop. Her decision was instantaneous and determined - she would apply the next day for the situation of nursemaid, though she would know it was the fairies' way of giving her her heart's desire.

She could hardly conceal her joy at breakfast the following morning, as she

heard her mother arrange to take Genevieve into the country for the day on an early train, leaving Margaret Campbell, the seamstress, very busy with their summer frocks for their departure to the seaside a month later. No one saw her when, close to ten o'clock, she closed the front door with the uttermost caution and ran up the quiet, pretty street. Opposite the square she paused to smooth out her sash; it was her best pink one, and she had a violent admiration for it. She had on her best hat, too-a round, big-brimmed one with flat pink tabs behind that hung just to the blunt edge of her cropped brown hair, level with her ears. Every window she passed gave back a pinkand-white reflection that delighted her. Oh! they would be sure to take her, she was so nice. It had not occurred to her how she could manage daily and mysterious absences. She meant to have a surfeit of carriage rolling today and leave the rest to fate. Even the journey to the place was a thrilling experience. She had never gone so far alone before. She jumped, skipped. balanced herself on the curbstone until she was giddy, helped a boy to fly a kite, bought a molasses cocoanut ball at an Italian's stand, and, refreshed, ambitious, came at last to Seventh Avenue and the magical number.

It flashed in gold from a sign over a shop, and so did three gold balls. Susy paused before it, excited. She had frequently seen shops like this, and they had always piqued her imagination as weird and undecipherable. The window was full of things she would have loved for herself—rings, bracelets, an accordion, a banjo, a cornet, and golden chains of all sorts strung in little lines across the glass. Flashing and opulent it seemed to Susy, just the spot a fairy would select to place the baby for which

she had prayed.

She had to use all her strength to turn the heavy, nickel knob and enter the house of mystery. The interior in no way lived up to the resplendent window, and Susy felt distinctly disappointed. She saw only an ordinary shop, with tied-up bundles on rows and

rows of shelves. It was rather dusty, and the smell was close and hot. The man behind the counter, who was mending a fur tippet, did not fulfil her idea of a fairy's ambassador; small gold hoops were in his ears, his nose was large and very red, and he wore no collar. She stood near the door and hesitated. She saw no baby.

The man looked up, still stitching, "Vell, sissy, vot haf you?"

"I came to mind the baby," Susy said, flattening herself against the door and staring hard,

"For why?" he asked in a screech of astonishment. As she remained silent, he nodded his head at her and chuckled loudly, showing large, gray teeth. "To mind the baby—yay-as?"

"I saw it in the paper," said Susy, a little frightened.

He bent over the counter and looked at her, from her shining shoes to her beautiful little hat, and his merriment increased. He turned to an open space at the end of the counter and yelled through it:

"Meenie!"

"Yay-as?" came shrilly in response. "Come here once."

"For why?" was shricked back.

"Here comes yet another by that so grand adwertisement of your brother Abe's."

All this was Greek to Susy, and she was much inclined to run away. But while she hesitated, a leisurely, heavy step was followed by the appearance of a very stout woman with a face that reminded Susy of one of the Jack o' Lanterns on Hallowe'en. She marveled at the purplish white powder caked in the creases of the woman's nose and chin, and the bright red wig that sat up so high and frankly over her own black hair.

The pair talked for a moment in an unknown tongue, the man still laughing, the woman frowning pettishly, with evident resentment of his mirth. She waddled from behind the counter, sat down in a labored, bulky way, and beckoned to Susy.

"Come here once. See, Sam, how

your foolishness frightens her. Stop laughing. For goodness' sake, ain't you got laugh enough yet? Come here." she said again to Susy. Her smile was engaging, reassuring, and Susy crossed slowly to her. "What for you come? The adwertisement-is it so? You to mind a baby!" She took Susy's hands: "Why, you ain't yet eight years. Nine?" she exclaimed. "Is it so?"

"Where's the baby?" Susy asked

bruskly.

"Isadore is out in the kerritch---"

"Oh, can't I roll him?"

"Ach!" the man howled in an ecstasy of laughter; "what grand a nurse-girl you got by that so fine adwertisement!"

"Isadore is out by his aunt," the woman continued. "She goes back by her home in Hartford to-morrow, and my brother Abe, who is yet awful smart, thought by the paper to get some one to roll Isadore, because I ain't strong through the heart, and when I walk-

"Oh, let me!" Susy pleaded. "I know how. The nurses on our street

know how good I roll."

The man here velled out what sounded like a vigorous objection in an unknown tongue, to which the

woman evidently agreed.

"No, my dee-ar," she said, patting Susy's cheek with fat, heavily ringed fingers; "no, my dee-ar; you are too little. Your mother don't know nothings of that adwertisement, I guesshey? Your mother don't guess you try for this chob?"

Susy's lip stuck out hard. She was close to tears.

"Let me see it?" she asked, a real

hunger in her voice.

"Isadore? He ain't here. He is already out by his auntie, by the grocery on the corner."

."To-morrow?" pleaded Susy.

It was no use. With much jabbering in the unknown tongue, with much derisive laughter of the man at the woman, many shakes of the hand from the latter, and shakes of the head in regard to the engaging of her at some future time, Susy found herself dis-

"If your mama comes to-morrow and asts that you roll Isadore in front of

the door-vou dast."

This was the only concession gained, and it held no glint of hope to the truant. She went up the street, her eyes smarting with tears. The disappointment was so keen, the color went quite out of life for the moment. Counting on her own subtle, superhuman comprehension of the fairies' methods, she had never dreamed of a refusal. Yet she had been turned away and with mocking laughter. Just because she was little for her age, they would not let her mind Isadore, show how strong she was, and what a tried and true carriage roller she could be.

She had lost her handkerchief, and had paused to wipe her eyes on her dimity skirt when her miserable gaze chanced on the thing that obsessed her -a baby in a carriage! It stood before a grocery-shop, and no one was near it. An expression that was rapacious passed over Susy's face. leaped toward the carriage, her heart bounding, and bent over the baby. He was sitting up, a white flannel middy cap, with many-hued worsted balls trimming its edge, perched sideways on his head and tied under his chin. His face had become oleaginous from an unnecessarily close acquaintance with a twisted piece of bread and butter, but out of the streaks and moisture a pair of beautiful dark eyes looked into Susy's, and he gave her a wide, almost toothless smile of such extreme friendliness. her heart warmed to him.

She looked about for the nurse. In the shop she could see a tangle of women bending over fruit and vege-With an intuition that made her breath come faster, she realized that this must be Isadore waiting for his aunt. Since she had come seeking him, she felt at once there was a bond between them, and that the fairies did not mean her to go back utterly un-

"Your name is Isadore? Isadore?" she cooed at him.

In response he gave a bound that strained his carriage strap, and gurgled:

"Izz-Izz-Izz."

"You poor, neglected child!" said Susy, bending over him and mimicking an experienced, maternal air. "Is no one taking care of you? Not a one? Goo—goo! Little dear—mother's own love. Well, I shall take care of you. I'll roll you, Isadore, until she stops me."

She moved cautiously to the handle and pushed the carriage a yard one way and then the other. Then she waited, expecting a woman to bound out, screaming to her to go away. It was her experience that children were continually being told not to do the very things that to them seemed most fitting and enjoyable. She felt a little thrill of pleasure that no one seemed to object, so she grew bolder and rolled Isa-

dore to the corner.

Should she turn the carriage now? Dare she—and come back leaving Isadore facing the other way? Even as she balanced the temptation, she turned the carriage and came back. Bolder now, she turned it again and went back to the corner. Certainly she did love Rolling was tame without turning. turning. Suppose she turned the corner, just the least little bit, to see how it felt to roll in another street? Feeling like a pirate who has hoisted his black flag, but supremely happy, she obeyed this impulse, too. A heady delight, the sort one got coasting down a hill, ran through her as she rolled fast to the next corner and turned that, too, at such a sharp angle and with such a flourish that Isadore bobbed sideways and lost his bread and butter. Susv bustled to him, lifted him high, and bounced him down hard, three times, making soft, comfortable sounds:

"You poor love, you've lost your bread!" Isadore still bobbed over, making lunges toward the mangled crust. "You can't have it, my pet, because it's dirty," she chided. But declassée as it now was, Isadore considered it desirable, and began to howl for it with a startling clamor. "No, no, no," said Susy, setting her lips firmly.

"I am astonished, Isadore. You can't want that muddy bread."

As he continued of a different opinion, Susy rolled him fast from the spot to divert him, he weeping the while with the emotional abandon of the

Oriental temperament.

Next to turning corners—perhaps quite as much—she loved lowering a carriage over a curbstone and then bending on the handle to lift the front wheel up again. Isadore was still lamenting his déjeuner, and looking back with streaming eyes, as Susy propelled him rapidly and with a delightful sense of danger and independence across the busy middle of the street to the other side. Her face was as pink as her hat ribbons, and she was dancing on her toes with a mad delight. Her home, sedate and quiet; the shop with the wonderful window and three golden balls; Isadore's rude, laughing father and his kind, fat mother with the funny wig; Isadore's aunt in the grocery-shop -all of these had vanished for Susy, and nothing existed but Isadore in his carriage, and her opportunity to roll him where she pleased.

Breathless from the adventure of crossing the street, she hurried to a shadowy spot before a vacant shop, and wiped her face on her skirt. This made her realize that Isadore must be warm, too, for the spring sun was now at its noon strength. She surveyed him as he lay back, weak from sobbing, and became vividly aware of his buttery hands and face, and his clothes disor-

dered from much lunging.

"Oh, how can you get yourself so untidy, Isadore?" she asked, sternly shaking her head. "Tch! Tch! Your cap is so nice and new—but look at the strings—you have been chewing them. Well, well! I must tidy you up a lit-

tle." Isadore's toilet was begun, and he had a miserable time while Susy was enjoying herself. She took off his laprobe, once blue, now washed to a vague shadow of itself, and shook it hard. Then she took off Isadore's cap and shook that, afterward spreading out the ribbons to dry. She brushed crumbs

from the carriage, pulled up his stockings, took off a cloth, moist with aromatic liniment, which he wore around his throat, and then lifted him up and down, vigorously placing him in the exact middle of the seat. His weeping had become a miserable whine, and he drooped sideways cheerlessly, though while she worked Susy talked lovingly and chirruped to him as if he were a

canary.

The final triumph was the washing of Isadore's face. There was no water convenient, but she spied an ice wagon a little distance away, and ran to it. She had always longed to stand on the step of an ice wagon, the way the boys did. Now she could. She loved sticking her head into the cold, shadowy cart, "scrabbling" up a few lumps of ice, which she carried back to the carriage, reserving one piece to nibble on the while. Oh, this was life indeed!

But grave trouble followed with Isadore. After taking off his petticoat, as the nearest likeness to a towel available, and holding the ice in it until it was a wet rag, she tried to apply it to his face. Her attempts were resisted with a violence really marvelous in such a small creature. He seemed to become on the instant some sort of a mad insect or frog, all waving hands and kicking feet, twisting and turning in frenzy, and emitting a fugue of yells that made several people glance curiously toward the little pair before passing on. But in the end Isadore was washed, and washed well. Though exhausted and rigid, all vivacity gone out of him, the victim of a geometrical neatness, he was Susy's ideal. She surveyed him proudly. The cloth with the liniment had been flung away, and his bared, dimpled throat invited her kisses: the petticoat, now a wet lump, was hidden under the smooth lap-robe; his ribbons were spread out in a butterfly bow under his quiet chin.

Another hour passed, with more rapturous rolling, turning, dipping up and down, and the purchase of two peppermint-sticks for Isadore and herself. She rolled with one hand, ate with the other. She even did venturesome things with the carriage, rolling it at a perilous angle on one wheel, and rocking it until Isadore bounced under the strap like a rubber ball. It was enlightening and highly satisfying to be able to realize how many things one could do successfully when there were no tiresome, grown-up people interfering and proph-

esying disaster.

It puzzled but did not alarm her that the now well-groomed Isadore had a blasé air; he cared nothing for his peppermint-stick. Several times Susy closed his fingers on it and stuck it in his mouth, but his hold would relax. He was, in fact, weak from sobbing, and chilly without his petticoat, and there was no peppermint-stick, no matter how gaily striped, that could make him the joyous thing he had been before Susy Gilvarry had crossed his path.

She would have continued the rolling for hours longer, but she began to feel hungry, and noticed, too, that a very black cloud was creeping over the

sun.

"It's going to rain, Isadore, and I'm going to take you right home," she said, tucking him in busily and again thrusting the peppermint-stick into his budlike mouth. He looked heavily at her and began to sneeze. "Susy will take tired little sweetness home for his lunch. Susy is minding him."

She tried to put up his parasol as a precaution against the coming rain, but her soft fingers could not move the spring, so she bent over and pressed effusive kisses on his cold cheeks and inch-long lashes, retied his immaculate cap ribbons quite unnecessarily, and then turned the carriage to go hurriedly

back.

But she found it was easy to turn and not easy to go back. Whether Isadore's home or her own lay to right or left she did not know, and she was afraid to ask-she was even afraid to acknowledge her helplessness to herself. She rolled faster, trembling a lit-The word "lost" had had a dark significance to her ever since she had read of the babes in the wood. She was not lost. She would find the way.

The fairies, who had gotten her into this predicament, would help her. Now she rolled Isadore feverishly as the sky grew blacker, and she looked vainly for some familiar marks in the many streets into which she turned at ran-

With an introductory clap of thunder, that seemed to make Susy's shoes rattle upon her feet, the storm commenced. Isadore lay in weary misery, occasionally giving a hoarse sob under the summer rain descending in straight, thick lines, drenching his lap-robe, his peppermint-stick, and himself. violence of the shower was sufficient to cast Susy into the hysteria which had been imminent, and this deepened at finding herself in a small park from which people were scuttling for shelter. She looked around panic-stricken. She had not seen this park before, ever, She must be far from her home, She was lost. In her distress, she would have been glad had Isadore wept lustily, for it would have been companionable to know that they were both suffering and in sympathy.

What was to be done? Light flashed on her distracted mind—she must pray, of course. She always prayed with unusual energy when she was afraid of the wind at night, or when she wanted some special thing for her birthday or at Christmas; so she sank to her knees before one of the benches, and while the rain beat upon her shoulders she became an exhorter:

"Oh, God, please save us—we are lost. I want to take Isadore back to the grocery-store, please. He may get cold, and I—I—am not feeling very well."

The answer to the prayer—for so Susy translated it—was a terrifying one. As she rose from her knees she saw a big policeman in a glistening rubber-coat coming toward her, waving his arms wildly.

"Get home out of this!" he cried, on reaching her. "Look at the child dhreepin' with the wet, an' you foolin' here;" and in a fatherly way he put up Isadore's parasol. "Get along as quick as ye can," he cried.

Susy gave herself up to her grief, acknowledged her hopeless condition, and clung to the carriage-handle in terror.

"I don't know the way—I don't know
—the way! I'm—lost!"

"You're lost, you say? Where do you live?"

Susy told him.

"Well, come along; I'll have ye both home as fast as I can."

"But that isn't his house," Susy said, as she felt the man's big, kind hand close around her own.

"Isn't this your brother?" She shook her head in vehement, wretched denial. "He's not? Did his mother ask you to mind him here in the park?"

Susy gasped, looked straight into his eyes, and on a wave of desperate courage replied: "I found him outside a grocery-store—oh, far away!—and I took him."

"You took him!" the policeman cried, his face a mixed frown and smile, sparkling with rain. "You walked off with a strange child, you did? Upon me sow!! Well, come along out of this, or you'll both be dead." He took Susy with one hand and pushed the carriage with the other. "It's a moighty fine lickin' you ought to get," Susy heard him mutter, though he smiled.

"Are you taking me to Washington

Place?" she asked faintly.

"I'm takin' you an' the child, first of all, to the station-house, to dry yiz, ye young limb of the divil. Think of the poor child's mother—and your own mother, for you're nearly a baby yourself. If you were mine, I'd show you something."

Although this denunciation was given smilingly and with kind blue eyes, Susy felt the outer darkness close about her. She knew that policemen took wicked people in charge and hurried them to a place of terror and punishment called the station-house. She was being arrested. She must be a very wicked person. Something was going to happen to her. After this she went along, either dumb and watchful, or clinging pleadingly in moments of acutest self-judgment and expectation

to the big man's hand as he hurried her on. At length they paused before the Awful Place, the Abode of Dread, a green lamp on each side of the steps.

"Oh, I don't want to—oh, please take me home!" she said, dancing in a sudden spurt of agony. "I don't want to be hurt! Oh, don't hurt me!"

The policeman carried the carriage to the vestibule, and came back to her, where she stood wringing her hands.

"You're goin' to be dried, not hurted," he said. "Come along in;" and Susy was fairly hauled, stiff-

legged, up the steps.

She fell into a chair near the door, but this rest was denied her. The policeman brought her forward to a desk behind which a stout man with very shining spectacles sat.

"Well, Murphy?" said this Awful

Judge.

"I've run in the funniest yet," said Murphy. "Here's me prisoner. Look at her. She stole a kid—hooked it

from foreninst a grocery."

"Put down the parasol and let's look at it," said the sergeant eagerly, and peered over at the wobegone Isadore. "I believe that's the baby. They've been telephoning from headquarters about him, and his mother's been here, and his father and his aunt and his uncle and grandfather, and they're all plumb crazy." He broke off and surveyed Susy over his glasses. "What's his name? Do you know?"

"Maybe—Isadore," she said faintly.
"That's it—Isadore Cohen. Why
did you run off with him, causing all

this trouble?"

"I wanted to roll him," Susy said, and lifted her despoiled skirt to her

"Why didn't you ask permission?"

the man demanded.

"I did," she sobbed. "I kept asking every one that had a baby; and they wouldn't—and—and—oh, I want to see my mama now! I'm not feeling very well."

"Call up headquarters," said the sergeant to a bareheaded, uniformed man who was hovering near. "The father

is waiting there for a message. But first tell the matron to come here."

A very kind woman took the pair in charge. She was most concerned about Isadore, and, after undressing him, rolled him in a blanket and fed him with warm milk from a spoon. Susy's clothes were dried with his, and she was also given milk. So kind was the woman, Susy became almost cheerful, until she heard Isadore sneezing hard.

"I'm afraid the baby's got cold," said the matron, rocking him in her arms.

"I'm sorry it rained on poor Isadore," said Susy, looking down ruefully on all that was left of her hat. "I tried to put up the parasol, but it stuck."

She was indeed sorry, but not uncomfortably grief-stricken, for, to her delight, she found the station-house, instead of a dark, cold, fear-inspiring place, very quiet, warm, and altogether to her liking. But chaos came down upon its peace when the entire Cohen family rushed in. Susy faced the fat, kind mother first. She was still fat, but quite the reverse of kind as she shook Susy frantically and slapped her hard. Isadore was inspected by each one and all together. He was found to be ill, his throat-bandage gone.

"She haf killed my Izzy!" the poor mother wailed. "Look already how he snuffles so. Oh, if my Izzy die!"

"Get where she live!" the father demanded of the sergeant. "If I got toctor's bills, I make damages by her parents so."

The turmoil was awful. The words "damages," "dead," and even "murder," were screeched at Susy by Isadore's relatives. After their departure, she was ghastly and trembling before a coming Nemesis more awful, because she did not clearly know what to expect.

Murphy was deputed to take her

"This is the last baby you'll walk off with, I guess," said the sergeant, looking over his big, glistening glasses at her. "Are you sorry?"

Susy tried to answer. She could not. Isadore's family had left her a

wreck. She fell limply back, but into something as safe and comforting as a cradle; this was the circle formed by Murphy's arms as he lifted her.

"I'm afraid-I'm afraid," he heard her whisper down the back of his neck

as she clutched him.

"What's frightenin' you now?" he asked comfortingly, as he carried her down the steps.

"Oh. if I killed Isadore!" she

moaned. "If poor Isadore dies!"
"He won't," assured Murphy
cold in his head, that's all."

"I'm afraid," she still said, in a ghostly little tone.

"What else?"

"My new sash-my new hat-" He held her closer. "Lave all to me," said Murphy.



THE PROBABLE ORIGIN OF MAY THE FIRST

DERHAPS it was a primal curse inherited from Adam, Whom Eve in all her beauty couldn't placate

When he remarked on May the first: "We must be going, madam;

Our lease is up, and it is time to vacate."

And so a busy moving-van backed up, so runs the fable, And soon with Adam's household goods was laden, With fig-leaves, apples, furniture-including Cain and Abel-

And they were off to seek another Aiden.

Perhaps it is a tendency inherited from Noah, Who spake unto his neighbors disapproving:

"By jinks, I'm goin' anywhar, from Naples to Samoa! I don't care much, so long as I'm a-moving."

So then he gathered cats and gnats and elephants and camels, And stuffed the Ark with zoologic lumber.

And when at last on Ararat he set his household trammels He sent out cards, "Please note the change of number."

Perhaps we merely got it from our grand old Pilgrim Fathers. Who packed their trunks when spring was in its gay flower,

Braved Indians and pumpkin pies and other heathen bothers And called their ancient moving-van The Mayflower.

And so on May-day-let's suppose-on Plymouth Rock they tented, With tables, bedsteads, kitchenware, and pew-sets;

They neither rested night nor day until at last they'd rented Suburban homes all over Massachusetts.

Or maybe old Columbus on his voyages first discovered May moving in the Caribbean Ocean;

Or thoughts of new apartments in his restless bosom hovered When first for islands strange he took the notion.

'Twas May when Galileo said about the earth's rotation: "The world do move!"-howe'er the thought revolts us.

Month of domestic interchange, soap-suds, and decoration, The world do move—and goodness, how it jolts us!

WALLACE IRWIN.

I'Y AS A MERRY-GO-ROU BY MARY MANNERS





HE process of Fluttering seems, to the looker-on, a fatiguing one after the social butterfly has passed well into, or beyond, middle age. And yet, like all habits, when once ac-

quired, it is far easier to continue than to leave off. How can they settle, when their whole lives have been spent in constant motion? Frequent change has become their only idea of perfect rest, and if they do not absolutely refuse to grow old, it is at least an indecency they are not willing to commit in

public.

Most particular are the masculine kind to make a show of jauntiness in their coats, mustaches, and umbrellas; very careful are the feminine to avoid undue seriousness in costumes, coiffures, and complexions. Both scorn fatigue, and live laborious days and nights of amusement; and warm is their welcome in that society which is the aim and object of their existence. They are full of agreeable small-talk and racy gossip, and their manners are much more easy and natural than their fig-Some prim persons think the same of their morals. But you find young men still flocking about the tactful Miss Redleaf or the witty Mrs. Winter; and young girls contending prettily enough for that "approbation from Sir Hubert Stanley which is praise indeed."

Sir Hubert, whom, as good Americans, we had better represent as a man without a title, and call plain Mr. Oldboy, has ever set himself up as a critic and judge of female charms. His word, powerful even at five-and-twenty-if your mamas are to be believed-has ac-. cumulated weight with the length of vears. In his quaint, old-bachelor house he has quite a gallery of miniatures; successive decades of lovely faces, whose portraits he has pleased himself — and them — by collecting. When he asks a débutante to one of his famous dinners, bestows encomiums upon her appearance and behavior, and demands that she sit to his protégé painter, she feels that she has achieved real distinction; that she will become known far and wide, among her contemporaries and his, as an illustrated example of gracious beauty. Just as when her dancing is praised-between pants and puffs-by the somewhat corpulent but still light-footed Mr. Mc-Twirl, she knows herself worthy in the future of many partners; or when she has had the good fortune to make a clever speech to old Joe Sparks, she sees her reputation as a wit secured.

These veterans differ even more from each other than do the departments over which they still hold sway. The only thing they have in common is a slight mutual dislike and jealousy. Tom McTwirl considers Joe Sparks just "an old parrot, sir-don't you see, don't you know! Stuffed full of old jokes-don't you understand! And at times extremely impudent, by Jove!" Joe Sparks says of Tom McTwirl that "he dves his hair and wears corsetsthe old idiot!-and his boots are the best part of him."

They unite in thinking Clarence Oldboy more kinds of a mild old milksop than any man they ever knew, except in the selection of his cellar, of which they enjoy the choicest fruits every time they dine at his house. They all three thoroughly believe that they are pillars of society, however, and have no doubt that it would totter to its ruin if they withdrew their support.

Mr. McTwirl is a widower, although the change from his having an invalid wife-abroad-to his having no wife at all, is so imperceptible, even to himself, that it is hardly to be wondered at if his friends feel little difference. Messrs. Sparks and Oldboy are bachclors, and it has become the fashionable jest that they are both attentive to Miss Redleaf. Mrs. Winter, whose tongue is as sharp as a frosty morning, declares that if she took the two, it wouldn't be bigamy; there's not the making of a presentable husband between them. In consequence of which speech Mr. Oldboy does not invite Mrs. Winter to the dinner he is giving a certain elderly celebrity from across the seas, and strikes all mention of her name from his memoirs. He can inflict no greater blow than this-not to be mentioned in the history he is compiling of his life and times; a book which shall make the diary of Mr. Pepvs hide its diminished head. Miss Redleaf is asked to the elderly celebrity's dinner, and placed ostentatiously next to Mr. Sparks, as if to mark the fact that Mr. Oldboy's interest in her, though warm, is quite impersonal. "Discretion before all," is Mr. Oldboy's somewhat equivocal mot-

They are very coy about their sentiments, the advanced butterflies, no matter how hardened they may be in their feelings, and they dread mockery for themselves almost more than they enjoy indulging in it at the expense of others. Miss Redleaf, gorgeous in her orange-velvet gown-graciously modeled for her this year by the great Worth when she made her annual trip to Paris for fineries-hardly affects to bridle when Joe Sparks gives vent to his usual series of questionable witticisms. They really do not shock her in the least, so accustomed is she to the gay indecency of his badinage. But she comes quite near to a russet-colored blush when he rallies her upon the seat she is occupying, which happens to be at the end of the table, directly opposite her host, and so might be regarded as the place custom assigns to the mistress of the house.

She suffers agonies for fear that Mrs. Ispy-on the other side of the volatile Mr. Sparks-or Mr. Teaweed -next to herself-may have overheard

the conversation.

If Mr. Teaweed hears, it will be like a cold breath on the dim flame of a romance he has cherished for years. A pleasing, hopeless romance, centering round herself, which began in his not too hot youth, and has endured through his inefficient maturity, even to the present very late autumn of his life.

If Mrs. Ispy hears, she will have no compunctions about butchering her friend to make a Roman holiday, and distorting every word into an absurd comedy for all the world to wrinkle its nose and purse its mouth over,

A handsome, buxom, well-preserved lady of fifty or so may have, and should have, admirers, but she will not care to be ridiculed for matrimonial expectations, and ridicule Mrs. Ispy can, when the occasion presents itself, in the gentle, purring way that slyly excites laughter. Miss Redleaf's only hope of getting even," in case of need, will be to watch her chance and hold up to public comment the lady's most egregious blunders at the next bridge-whist class.

They play a good deal, the middleaged and elderly lady butterflies. Sometimes they lunch together first, and "gamble on their digestions"—at least, that is what Mrs. Winter calls it. Sometimes they play in the afternoon, late, and stay to tea. They are as smartly dressed as their own daughters, and more greedy about their winnings than their grandchildren about new toys. It seems, though, an incongruity to think of them with grandchildren, and an impossibility to attach the name of grandmother to any one of them.

The word "grandmother" seems sug-

gestive of an old—frankly and freely old—lady, with white hair, a stately figure, and softly flowing draperies of a dignity transcending fashion. An atmosphere of comforting peace should surround her—an atmosphere conducive to the confiding of small secrets and the confessing of small woes. She should have the calm of an unselfish outlook on life; the outlook of one who has done with all personal fret and turmoil, and is affected by them only as they affect those near and dear to

These stiffly laced, freshly colored, sprightly, coquettish dames may have kind hearts and amiable dispositions, but they are no mere lookers-on in the social game. They are still interested players, and they have parted with as few personal advantages and enthusiasms as possible. The every-day life of the merry-go-round is of stupendous importance still, and they literally havenot time to spare, nor strength to spend, upon anything outside of it. Some of them, indeed, can hardly understand that there is anything outside worthy of consideration; that beyond the glitter there is restful twilight and not utter darkness. But they do not look for quiet or rest until it is forced upon them altogether. There appears to be no such thing as "growing old gracefully" nowadays. You don't grow old -at least, as has been said before, not in public. You keep young, or youngish, and go till you drop. And until you absolutely do drop, to absent yourself from the great Whirligig would indicate a feebleness of brain and spirit almost contemptible.

It is generally believed that Mr. Sparks will never drop. It has been suggested that he will suddenly "go up" in a lively explosion of dry, gray dust. Mrs. Winter is responsible for the suggestion. Her vivid imagination has also pictured Mr. McTwirl plucked by a black hand, with fiery finger-tips, from the midst of a ball, and Mr. Oldboy mummified at the head of his own table. She sees Mrs. Ispy succumbing to a plethora of unassimilated information, and the brilliant garments of Miss

Redleaf ceremoniously continuing to keep their engagements long after their mistress has faded out of them, but she has omitted to make any prophecy about Mr. Teaweed, and it is perhaps for that reason that he contracts a common, ordinary cold, which turns itself

into pneumonia.

Now, in the rush and bustle of the season, the gentle absence of this meek butterfly from the general gatherings of balls, musicales, and operas is hardly more noticed than his gentle pres-But after he has put several hostesses to the trouble of filling his place at various dinners, great and small, it occurs to society to demand from itself what can be the matter with him. He is, in a way, one of its most useful members. He "fits in" anvwhere. He does not disdain, nor make himself merry at the expense of, those Outsiders whom the pinch of necessity sometimes forces his friends to entertain. He can, and does, talk agreeably to whomsoever his good or evil fortune places him next at dinner. He has more sense than Tom McTwirl-as. indeed, would indicate nothing remarkable-more tact than Joe Sparks, and more taste than Clarence Oldboy, but, being afflicted with the vices of modesty and self-distrust, he has arrived at no greater distinction than that of being a pleasant-mannered specimen of ineffective old-gentlemanhood, who is missed when he fails to keep his dinner engagements. However, it shows some degree of popularity to have had engagements to break, and it has been Mr. Teaweed's modest boast to himself that very seldom during the season does he take a meal at his club. The boarders in the respectable house where his slender income affords him two small rooms look upon him as the Glass of Fashion. The mere fact that they see him flitting out to present himself at entertainments, the magnificent accounts of which they will read in their morning papers, seems to invest themselves with a certain social importance. They like to come upon his name in the list of guests. The young clerks find pleasure in referring to him as "the old chap that lives in our house," when they converse with "lady friends" on the subject of happenings in the gay world. All the women speculate about him; the places he goes to, the people he meets, the things he must know that they would give their eyes and teeth—even if, like the Three Gray Sisters, they had but one of each among the lot of them—to know and gossip about. They feel distinctly defrauded of an interest legitimately theirs when the poor gentleman takes to his bed.

Society gradually finds out that he is ailing, and begins to ask where he lives, that it may go and make inquiries and leave cards for him. His mail has always gone to his club, which is the only address given in that admirable work, "The Social Register." Doesn't anybody know more than that?

"Don't you, my dear Georgianna?" insists Mrs. Ispy, interrogating Miss Redleaf with a piercing, detective eye.

Miss Redleaf disclaims the possession of any particular private intelligence concerning Mr. Teaweed's dwelling-place, and, balked in its kindly impulse, Fashion turns its attention elsewhere and forgets the invalid, until it wants him for another dinner, and is shocked to find he is not yet forthcoming.

It seems to Mr. Teaweed that he is not likely to "forthcome" for a long time, and as he lies patiently wakeful through the long nights, he wonders a little vaguely whether people are asking anything about him. He has no near relations left, and among his many intimate acquaintances few, if any, whom his reticent nature has permitted him to make into friends. He has been, of late years especially, shy of exposing the frugal habit of his life in a community where poverty appears slightly ridiculous. And it is therefore perfectly true that nobody knows where to find him; that when he disappears from the sight of the society that entertains him, he vanishes as completely as did Cinderella from the ken of the Prince when the clock struck twelve.

Mr. Teaweed feels that his clock has

struck an innumerable number of twelves since he first laid his head upon his bed. His nurse is capable, but not much interested in him, except as a patient whom it is her business to make a fight for against a certain contingency. He is more and more aware that he misses something; is lonely; has always been lonely; and is perhaps going out into the greatest loneliness of all without having known the best and simplest of life's gifts. A fairly large portion of the country's inhabitants are happy away from society and without much money, he supposes. If-long ago-he had gone to work and made a little more; or if she had thought she could be contented with a little less--- Well, well, it did seem absurd! Georgianna Redleaf living in genteel poverty, out of New York, with him for a husband, and perhaps several children! That was almost indecent as a picture! Such a blush suffused his gentle old face that the nurse hastened to take his temperature, fearing an increase of fever.

He was very restless all that day, and the next he formed an astonishing reso-He would send for her. He would send for Georgianna and warn her that it did not pay in the end, this sort of life. He was at the end, and he knew! It really was the very abomination of desolation not to have anybody to whom it mattered that you had ceased to fill your accustomed place, even if it were, as it suddenly seemed to him now, a place hardly worth the filling. A great longing to be mourned came over him. In all the years that he had drifted so quietly and amiably down the current of existence, he had never had the sense of something lacking as he had it now. He did not want Georgianna to experience this-this curious void. Now, there was Oldboywhy should she not accept Oldboy? A decent fellow. A very decent fellow. He remembered Clarence at school. Even in those days he was an admirer of beauty, the little rascal! A collector of illustrations out of Christmas papers. and lithographs of female loveliness advertising every known commodity. Yes, yes, it would be an excellent match

for both of them.

Somehow, in his rather wandering thoughts, they had become young again, while he, like a beneficent stage parent, ancient in days and overflowing with tenderness, made bright their future. But the thing must be settled at once. He felt he had no time to waste. So many things that used to be important had become of no account and slipped away from his memory; he was afraid of forgetting even this deliberate purpose. He dictated a rambling letter of several pages to Miss Redleaf, and would not be satisfied till the nurse had despatched it by a mes-

senger.

Conventionality of conduct, if not of conversation, had ever been the attribute of his Georgianna. She debated a long time before she outraged the proprieties, but outrage them she did to the extent of taking a cab and driving, in her plainest costume and concealed behind a thick veil, to the boarding-house of Mr. Teaweed. She felt Mrs. Ispy's eyes and Mrs. Winter's innuendos filling the air about her. What would have been romantic in youth, and pathetic in age, was-or might be made to seem-ridiculous at middle life. She could hear Joe Sparks exercising his ribald wit at her expense, but she set her face and demanded to be shown to the room of the invalid. The nurse met her in the hall.

"You are the lady he sent for?" she said. "I'm afraid he won't know you. He is much worse. I'm expecting the

doctor every minute."

"Perhaps I'd better not go in," sug-

gested Miss Redleaf.

"Georgianna, Georgianna," muttered a voice from behind the open door near her. "When it comes to this, it's not worth while, do you know!"

Miss Redleaf advanced a step and

hesitated.

"Settle, settle! Settle early in life and stay settled," continued the voice. "Have something—out of the world—that belongs to you—no matter

what you give for it. You tell Oldboy I said so. He'll understand."

The rest of the sentence was lost in

incoherent murmurings.

"He—he's delirious, is he not?" asked Miss Redleaf, in dignified confusion. "I wonder what he could have wanted me for. I can't be of any use, I suppose—can 1?"

"Not the least, madam," returned the

nurse composedly.

"Then perhaps I had better go," said Miss Redleaf. "I have an engagement for luncheon."

The habits of a lifetime asserted themselves in mechanically acknowledging the importance of the social obligation, and she turned away.

At the stair-head she paused. Old memories and new emotions pricked and stirred in her heart. Once upon a time he had-had almost seemed possible; if a fortune had been bestowed upon them-who knows? She might have--! Circumstanced as they were, it would have been madness, of course-they couldn't have lived that sort of life; but what had they to look back upon, or forward to, in this one? With a sudden stab of real pain, it struck her that he had done with it all. And she was going out to luncheon. In unaccountable agitation she rustled into her cab and gave the order "home." After all, he had always cared about

In a community where undue mourning, even for the nearly related dead, is considered rather a slight upon the merrily disposed living, you cannot make yourself conspicuous by publicly grieving for a friend, especially one of the opposite sex; but it is remarked—with covert smiles among the initiated—that Miss Redleaf is confined to the house by a severe cold for at least two weeks after the death of that meek flutterer. Mr. Teaweed.

Mr. Oldboy congratulates her upon "the magical effects of the rest" when he meets her again, and Joe Sparks and Tom McTwirl exchange rheumy old glances of slyness as he does so.



THE CASUAL HONEY MOON

JAMES BRANCH CABELL





GIVE you the captain's own account of it, though I abridge in consideration of his leisured style. Pompous and verbose I grant him, even in curtailment, but you are

to remember that these were the faults of his age, ingrained and quite defiant of deletion. And with this prelude—

Miss Allonby—says Captain Audaine -was that afternoon in a mighty cruel humor. Though I had omitted no reasonable method to convince her of the vehemence of my passion, 'twas without the twitch of an eyelash that she endured the volley of my sighs, the fusillade of my respectful protestations; and perfect candor compels me to admit that toward the end her silvery laughter disrupted the periods of a most elegant and moving peroration. And when the affair was concluded, and for the seventh time I had implored her to make me the happiest of men, the rogue merely observed: "But I don't want to marry you. Why on earth should I?"

"For the sake of peace," said I, "and in self-protection. For so long as you remain obdurate I must continue to importune, and presently I shall pester

you to death."

"Indeed, I think it more than probable," she returned, "for you dog me like a bailiff. I am cordially aweary, Captain Audaine, of your incessant persecutions; and, after all, marrying you is perhaps the civilest way of being rid of both them and you."

But by this I held each velvet-soft and tiny hand. "Nay," I dissented, "the subject is somewhat too sacred for jest. I am no modish lover to regard marriage as a business transaction and the lady as so much live stock thrown in with the estate. I love you with sincerity; and give me leave to assure you, madam, with a freedom which I think permissible on so serious an occasion, that, even as beautiful as you are, I could never be contented with your person without your heart."

She sat with eyes downcast, all one blush. Miss Dorothy Allonby was in the bloom of nineteen, and shone with every charm peculiar to her sex. But I have no mind to weary you with poetical rhodomontades proving her a paragon and myself an imbecile, as most lovers do; in a word, her face and shape and mien and wit alike astounded and engaged all those who had the happiness to know her, and had long ago rendered her the object of my entire adoration and the target of my daily rhapsodies. Now I viewed her in a contention of the liveliest hopes and fears, for she had hesitated, and had by hesitation conceded my addresses to be not utterly distasteful; and within that instant I knew that any life undevoted to her service and protection could be but a lingering disease.

But by and by, "You shall have your answer this evening," she said, and so

left me.

I fathomed the meaning of "this evening" well enough. For my adored Dorothy was all romance, and by preference granted me rendezvous in the back garden, where she would nightly tantalize me from her balcony, after the example of the Veronese lady in Shakespeare's spirited tragedy, which she prodigiously admired. Personally, my liking for romance had been of late somewhat tempered by the inclemency of the weather and the obvious unfriendliness of the dog; but there is no resisting a lady's commands, and, clear or foul, you might at any twilight's death have found me under her window, where a host of lyric phrases protested my devotion, and a cold in

the head confirmed it.

This night was black as a coal-pit. Strolling beneath the casement, well wrapped in my cloak—for it drizzled— I meditated impartially upon the perfections of my dear mistress and the tyrannic despotism of love. Being the source of our existence, 'tis not unreasonably, perhaps, that this passion assumes the proprietorship of our destinies and exacts of all mankind a com-To-night, at least, I mon tribute. viewed the world as a brave pavilion, lighted by the stars and swept by the clean winds of heaven, wherein we enacted varied rôles with God as audience; where in turn we strutted or cringed about the stage, where in turn we were beset and rent by an infinity of passions; but where every man must play the part of lover. That passion alone. I said, is universal: it set wise Solomon a-jigging in criminal byways, and sinewy Hercules himself was no stranger to its joys and inquietudes. And I cried aloud with the Roman: "Parce precor!" and afterward on God to make me a little worthier of Dorothy.

Engrossed in meditations such as these, I was fetched back to earth by the clicking of a lock, and, turning, saw the door immediately beneath her balcony unclose and afford egress to a slender, hooded figure. My amazement was considerable and my joy un-

bounded.

"Dorothy!" I whispered, as I hur-

ried toward her.

"Come!" was her response; and her finger-tips fell lightly upon my arm, and she guided me to the gateway opening into Jervis Lane. I followed with a trepidation you may not easily conceive; nor was this diminished when I found a post-chaise there, into which my angel hastily tripped.

I babbled I know not what inarticulate nonsense. But, "Heavens!" she retorted, "do you mean to keep the par-

son waiting all night?"

This was her answer, then. Well. 'twas more than I could have hoped for, though to a man of any sensibility this summary disposal of our love-affair could not but smack of the distasteful. Say what you will, every gentleman has about him somewhere a tincture of that venerable and unsophisticated age when wives were taken by capture and were retained by force; he infinitely prefers that the lady should hold off to the very last; and, properly, her tongue must sound defiance long after the melting eyes have signaled how desirous is that anatomical Tarpeia, the heart of woman, to betray the citadel and yield the treasury of her charms.

Nevertheless, I stepped into the vehicle. The postilion was off in a twinkling, as the saying is, over the roughest road in England. Conversation was impossible, for Dorothy and I were jostling like two pills in a box; and as the first observation I attempted resulted in a badly bitten tongue, I pru-

dently held my peace.

This endured for perhaps a quarter of an hour, at the end of which period the post-chaise stopped on a sudden, and I assisted my companion to alight. Before us was a villa of considerable dimension, and situate, so far as I could immediately ascertain, in the midst of a vast and desolate moor; there was no trace of human habitation within the radius of the eye; and the house itself presented no sign of either tenancy or illumination.

"In God's name—" I began, "Hasten!" spoke a voice from with-

in the parsonage. And Dorothy drew me toward a side door, overhung with ivy, where, sure enough, a dim light burned. 'Twas but a solitary candle stuck upon a dresser at the farther end of a large, low-ceiled apartment; and in this flickering obscurity we found a tremulous parson in full canonicals, who had united our hands and gabbled half-way through the marriage service before I had the slightest notion of what had befallen me.

And such is the unreasonable disposition of man that this, the consummation of my most ardent desires, actually aroused in me a feeling not altogether unakin to irritation. skulking celerity, this hole-and-corner business, I thought, was in ill-accord with the respect due to a sacrament; and, personally, I could have wished my marriage to have borne a less striking resemblance to the conference of three thieves in a cellar. But 'twas over in two twos. Within scantier time than it takes to tell of it, Francis and Dorothy were made one, and I had turned to salute my wife.

She gave a shriek of anguish and drew away, staring with wide eyes. "Heavens!" said she; "I have married the wrong man!"

Without delay I caught the guttering candle from the dresser yonder and held it to her countenance. You can conceive 'twas with no pleasurable emotion I discovered that I had inadvertently espoused the Dowager Marchioness of Falmouth, my adored Dorothy's grandmother, and candor compels me to admit that the lady seemed equally dissatisfied. Words failed us; and the newly wedded couple stared at one an

other in silence.
"Captain Audaine," said she, at last,
"the situation is awkward."

"In faith, dear lady," I returned, "that is the precise thought that has just occurred to me."

"And I am of the opinion," she continued, "that you owe me some sort of explanation. For I had planned to elope with Mr. Vanringham——"

"Do I understand your ladyship to allude to Mr. Francis Vanringham, the play-actor, at present the talk of Tunbridge yonder?" said I,

She bowed a grave response.

"This is surprising news," said I. "And grant me leave to tell you that a woman of mature years, possessed of a considerable fortune and unquestionable gentility, does not ordinarily sneak out of the kitchen door to meet a raddle-faced actor in the middle of the night. 'Tis indeed a circumstance to stagger human credulity. Oh, believe me, madam, for a virtuous woman, the back garden is not a fitting approach to the altar, nor is a man her suitable companion there at eleven o'clock in the evening."

"Hey, my fine fellow!" says my wife; "and what were you doing there?"

"Among lovers," I returned, "it is an established custom to keep watch beneath the windows of the adored fair one. And I, madam, have the temerity to desire an honorable union with your granddaughter."

She wrung her withered hands. "That any reputable woman should have nocturnal appointments with gentlemen in the back garden, and implicate her own grandmother in an odious marriage! I protest, Captain Audaine, the world to-day is no longer a suitable residence for a lady!"

"Indeed, this is a cruel, bad business," the parson here put in. He was pacing the apartment in a contention of dubiety and amaze. "Mr. Vanringham will be vexed."

"You will pardon me," I retorted, "if I lack time to sympathize with your Mr. Vanringham. Just at present I am sufficiently engrossed with my own affairs. Am I, indeed, to understand that this lady and I are legally married?"

He rubbed his chin. "Faith," says he, "'tis a case that lacks precedents. But the coincidence of the Christian names is devilish awkward; the service takes no cognizance of surnames, and I have merely married a Francis and a Dorothy; so that, as far as I know, the ceremony is quite as legal as though I had, as I intended, married the Dorothy in question to Francis Vanringham and not to Francis Audaine."

"Why, then," said I, "there is but one remedy, and that is an immediate

divorce."

My wife shrieked. "Have you no sense of decency, Captain Audaine? Never has there been a divorce in my family. And must I be the first to drag that honorable name into a public court? To have my reputation worried at the bar by a parcel of sniggering lawyers, while the town wits buzz about it like flies about carrion? I pray you, do not suggest such, a hideous thing."

"Here's the other Francis," says the parson, at this point. And it was—a raffish, handsome fellow, somewhat suggestive of the royal duke, yet rather more like a sneak-thief, but with an aroma of the dancing-master. He had missed his lady at their rendezvous, owing to my premature appearance, and

had followed us post-haste.

"My Castalio!" she screamed. "My Beaugard!" She ran to him, and with disjointed talk and quavering utterance disclosed the present lamentable posture

of affairs.

And I found the tableau they afforded singular. My wife had been a toast, they tell me, in Queen Anne's time, and even now the lean and restless gentlewoman showed as the abandoned house of youth and wit and beauty, with only here and there a trace of the old occupancy; and always her furtive eyes shone with a cold and shifting glitter, as though a frightened imp peeped through a mask of Hecuba, and in every movement there was an ineffable touch of something loosely hinged and fantastic. In a word, the marchioness was not unconscionably sane, and was known far and wide as a gallant woman resolutely oblivious to the batterings of Time, and so avid of flattery that she was ready to smile on any man who durst give the lie to her looking-glass. Demented landlady of her heart, she would speedily sublet that dusty chamber to the first adventurer who came prepared to pay his scot in the false coin of compliment; and 'twas not difficult to comprehend how this young Thespian had acquired its tenancy.

But now the face of Mr. Vanringham was attenuated by her revelations, and the wried mouth of it, as clogged, suggested that the party be seated, in order to consider more at ease the unfortunate contretemps. Fresh lights were kindled, since we were one and all past fear of discovery by this; and we four assembled about the long table that occupied the center of the apartment.

"The situation," Mr. Vanringham began, "may reasonably be described as desperate. Here we sit, four ruined beings. For Doctor Quarmby has betrayed an unoffending couple into involuntary matrimony, an act of which his bishop can scarcely fail to take official notice; Captain Audaine and the marchioness are entrapped into a loveless marriage, than which there is no greater misery in life; and my own future, I need hardly add, is irrevocably blighted by the loss of my respected Dorothy, without whom continued animation must necessarily be a hideous and hollow mockery. Yet there occurs to me a panacea for these disasters."

"Then, indeed, Mr. Vanringham," said I, "there's one of us who will be extremely glad to know the name of it."

He faced me with a kind of com-"You, sir, have passion in his eyes. caused a sweet and innocent lady to marry you against her will. Oh, beyond doubt, your intentions were immaculate, but the fact remains in its stark enormity; and the hand of an inquisitive child is not ordinarily salved by its previous ignorance as to the corrosive properties of fire. You have betrayed confiding womanhood, an act abhorrent to all notions of gentility. There is but one conclusive proof of your repentance; need I add that it is self-destruction?"

"You will pardon me," I observed, "but suicide is a deadly sin, and I would not willingly insult any gentle-woman by evincing so marked a desire for the devil's company in preference

to hers."

"Your argument is sophistry," he returned, with a trace of contempt; "since it is your death alone that can endear you to your bride. Death is the ultimate and skilled assayer of our mingled natures; by his art our gross constituents-our foibles, our pettinesses, nay, our very crimes-are severed from the sterling ore, that spark of divinity that yet glows in the vilest bosom; and from his crucible memory, like an ethereal spirit, mounts to hallow our renown and enshrine our final resting-place. Ah, no, Captain Audaine! Death alone may canonize the husband and render him the touchstone for tearful and inviduous comparisons. Once you are dead, your wife will adore you; once you are dead, your wife and I have before us an unobstructed road to marital felicity, which, living, you sadly encumber; and only when he has delivered your funeral oration may Doctor Quarmby be exempt from apprehension lest his part in your marriage ceremony bring about his defrockment. I urge the greatest good for the greatest number, captain; living, you plunge all four of us into irretrievable misery; whereas the nobility of your death must necessarily exalt your soul to Heaven, accompanied and endorsed by the fervent prayers of three grateful hearts."

"And faith, sir," says the parson, "while no clergyman extant has a more cordial aversion to suicide, I cannot understand why a prolonged existence should greatly tempt you. You love Miss Dorothy Allonby, as all Tunbridge knows; and to a man of sensibility, what can be more awkward than suddenly to have thrust upon him grandfathership of the adored one? You must, in this position, necessarily be exposed to the committal of a thousand gaucheries daily; and if you insist upon your irreligious project of procuring a divorce, what, I ask, can be your standing with the lady? Can she smile upon the suit of a person who has publicly cast aside the sworn love and obedience of a being to whom she owes her very existence?-or will any clergyman in England participate in the union of a woman to her ex-grandfather? Believe me, sir, 'tis less the selfishness than the folly of your clinging to this vale of tears that I deplore. And I protest that this rope"—he fished up a coil from the corner—"appears to have been deposited here by a benign and all-seeing Providence to suggest the manifold advantages of hanging yourself as compared with the untidy operation of cutting your throat."

"And conceive, sir," says my wife, "what must be the universal grief for the bridegroom so untimely taken off in the primal crescence of his honeymoon. Your funeral will be unparalleled both for sympathy and splendor; all Tunbridge will attend in tears; and it will afford me a melancholy but perfectly sincere pleasure to extend to you the hospitality of the Allonby mausoleum—which many connoisseurs have accounted the finest in the three kingdoms."

"I must venture," said I, "to terminate this very singular conversation. You have, one and all, stated certain undeniable advantages incidental to my immediate demise; your logic is unassailable, and has proven suicide my unquestionable duty; and my refutation is confined to the simple statement that I will cheerfully see every one of you damned before I'll do it."

Mr. Francis Vanringham rose with a little bow. "You have insulted both womanhood and the established church by the spitting out of that ribald oath; and me you have with equal levity wronged by the theft of my affianced bride. I am only a play-actor, but in inflicting an insult a gentleman must either lift his inferior to his own station or else forfeit his gentility. I wear a sword, Captain Audaine. Will you grant me the usual satisfaction?"

"My fascinating comedian," said I, "if 'tis a fight you are desirous of, I can assure you that in my present state of mind I would cross swords with a costermonger or the devil, or the Archbishop of Canterbury, with quite equal impartiality. But scarcely in the view of a lady; and, therefore, as you boast a greater influence in that quarter, will you kindly advise the withdrawal of yonder unexpected addition to my family?"

"There is an inner room," says he, pointing to the door behind me; and I held it open as my wife swept through.

"You are the epitome of selfishness," she flung at me, in passing. "Had you possessed one ounce of gallantry, you had long ago freed me from this odious marriage."

"Madam," I returned, with a congé, "is it not rather a compliment that I so willingly forfeit a superlunary bliss in order to retain the pleasure of

your society?"

She sniffed; and I closed the door behind her; and within the moment the two men fell upon me, from the rear, and presently had me trussed like a fowl and bound with that abominable

parson's coil of rope.

"Believe me," says Mr. Vanringham, now seated upon the table and indolently dangling his heels-the ecclesiastical monstrosity, having locked the door upon Mrs. Audaine, had taken a chair, and was composedly smoking a churchwarden-"believe me. I lament the necessity of this uncouth proceeding. But what the devil! man is a selfish animal. You conceive, Captain Audaine, my affection for vonder venerable lady is not overwhelming; but a rich marriage is the only means adapt to repair my tattered fortunes, and so I cheerfully avail myself of her credulity. By God!" cries he, with a quick lift of speech, "to-morrow I had been a landed gentleman but for you, you blundering omadhaun! And is a shabby merry-andrew from God knows where to pop in and spoil the prettiest plot was ever hatched?

'Twas like a flare of lightning, this sudden outburst of arid malignity; you saw in it quintessentialized the man's hatred of a world that had ill-used him, stark and venomous; and 'twas gone as quickly as the lightning, yielding to the pleasantest smile imaginable. Meanwhile, you picture me inanimate, lying helpless beneath his oscillating toes.

"Twas not that I lacked the courage to fight you," he continues; "nor the skill, either. But there is always the possibility that by some awkward thrust or other you might deprive the

stage of a distinguished ornament. As a sincere admirer of my genius, I must, in decency, avoid such risks. 'Tis quite necessary to me, of course, that you be got out of this world speedily, since a further continuance of your existence would disastrously interfere with my plans for the future: having gone thus far. I cannot reasonably be expected to cede my interest in the marchioness and her estate. Accordingly, I decide upon the simplest method, and tip the wink to Quarmby here; the lady quits the apartment in order to afford us opportunity of settling our pretensions to her hand, with cutlery as arbiter, and returns to find your perforated carcass artistically disposed in yonder extremity of the room. Slain in an affair of honor, my dear captain! The disputed damsel will think none the worse of me, a man of demonstrated valor and affection; Quarmby and I will bury you in the cellar; and, being freed from her late, unfortunate alliance, my esteemed Dorothy will immediately seek consolation in the embraces of a more acceptable spouse. Confess, sir, is it not a scheme of Arcadian simplicity?"

'Twas the most extraordinary sensation of my life to note the utterly urbane and cheerful countenance with which he disclosed the meditated atrocity. This unprincipled young man was about to run me through with no more compunction than a naturalist pinning a new beetle among his collection may mo-

mentarily feel.

Then my quickened faculties were stirred on a sudden, and for the first

time I opened my mouth.

"You were about to say?" he queried.
"I was about to relieve a certain surplusage of emotion," I retorted, "by observing that I consider you to be a chattering, vain fool; to be a lean-witted and improvident fool!"

"Harsh words, my captain," says he,

with lifted evebrows.

"But not of an undeserved asperity," I returned. "Do you think the marchioness, her flighty head crammed with scraps of idiotic romance, would elope save with strict regard for the canons of romance? Not so; depend upon it,

a letter was left upon her pincushion announcing her removal with you, and in the most approved heroic style arraigning the obduracy of her unsympathetic grandchildren. Do you not think that Gerald Allonby will follow her? Depend upon it, he will; and the proof is," I added, "that you may hear his horses yonder on the heath, as I heard them some moments ago."

Vanringham leaped to the floor and stood thus, all tension. He raised clenched, quivering hands toward the ceiling. "Oh, King of Jesters!" he cried, in horrid blasphemy; and then again: "Oh, King of Jesters!"

And by this men were shouting without, and at the door there was a prodigious and augmented hammering. And the parson wrung his hands and began to shake like a dish of jelly in a thunder-storm.

"Captain Audaine," Mr. Vanringham presently resumed, "you are correct. Clidamira and Parthenissa would never have fled into the night without leaving a note upon the pincushion. The folly that I kindled in your wife's addled pate has proven my ruin. Remains to make the best of Hobson's choice." He unlocked the door. "Gentlemen, gentlemen," says he, with deprecating hand, "surely this disturbance is somewhat outré, a trifle misplaced, upon the threshold of a bridal-chamber?"

Gerald Allonby thrust into the room, followed by Lord Humphrey Degge, my abhorred rival for Dorothy's affection, and two attendants.

"My grandmother!" shrieks Gerald.
"Villain, what have you done with my grandmother!"

"The query were more fitly put," Vanringham retorts, "to the lady's husband." And he waves his hand toward

And thereupon the newcomers unbound me with many exclamations of wonder. "And now," I observed, "I would suggest that you bestow upon Mr. Vanringham and that blot upon the Clurch of England yonder the bonds from which I have been so recently ejected, or, at the very least, keep a vigilant watch upon those more than

suspicious characters, what time I narrate the surprising events of the evening."

Subsequently, I made a clean breast of affairs to Gerald and Lord Humphrey Degge. They heard me with attentive, even sympathetic, countenances; but presently the face of Lord Humphrey brightened as he saw a not unformidable rival thus jockeyed out of the field; and when I had ended, Gerald rose and, with an oath, struck his open palm upon the table.

"This is the most fortunate coincidence," he swears, "that I have ever known of. I came prepared to find my grandmother the wife of a beggarly play-actor; and I discover, to the contrary, that she has contracted an alliance with a gentleman for whom I entertain the most sincere affection."

"Surely," I cried, aghast, "you cannot mean to accept this most iniquitous and inadvertent match!"

"What is your meaning, Captain Audaine?" says the boy sharply. "What other course is possible?"

"Faith!" said I, "after to-night's imbroglio, I have nothing to observe concerning the possibility of anything; but if this marriage prove a legal one, I, for my part, am most indissuadably resolved to rectify my error in the divorce court without delay."

Now Gerald's brows were uglily compressed. "A divorce," said he, with an extreme of deliberation, "means the airing of to-night's doings in open court. I take it 'tis the duty of a man of honor to preserve the reputation of his grandmother stainless; whether she be a housemaid or the Queen of Portugal, her frailties are equally entitled to endurance, her eccentricities to toleration; can a gentleman, then, sanction any proceeding of a nature calculated to make his grandmother the laughing-stock of England? The point is a nice one."

"For conceive," said Lord Humphrey, with the most knavish grin I ever knew a human countenance to pollute itself with, "that the entire matter will be consigned by the shorthand writers to the public press, and after

this be hawked about the streets; and that the venders will yell particulars of your grandmother's folly under your very windows; and that you must hear them in impotence, and that for some months the three kingdoms will hear of nothing else. Gad, I quite feel for you,

my dear!"

"I have fallen into a nest of madmen!" I cried. "You know, both of you, that I adore Gerald's sister, the incomparable Miss Allonby; and, in any event, I demand of you, as rational beings, is it equitable that I be fettered for life to an old woman's apronstrings simply because a doctor of divinity is parsimonious of his candles?"

But Gerald had drawn with a flourish. "You have repudiated my kinswoman," says he, "and you cannot deny me the customary satisfaction. Harkee, my fine fellow, Dorothy will marry my friend, Lord Humphrey, if she will be advised by me; or, if she prefer it, she may marry the Man in the Iron Mask or the piper that played before Moses, so far as I am concerned; but as for you, I hereby offer you your choice between quitting this apartment as my grandfather or as a corpse."

"I won't fight you!" I shouted. "Keep the boy off, Degge!" But as the infuriate lad rushed upon me, I was forced, in self-protection, to draw likewise, and after a brief engagement presently knocked his sword across the

room

"Gerald," I pleaded, "for the love of God, consider! I cannot fight you. Heaven knows this tragic farce has robbed me of all pretension toward your sister, and that I am just now but little better than a madman; yet 'tis her blood that animates your veins, and in that dear fluid I cannot imbrue my hands. You are no swordsman, lad—keep off!"

And there I had blundered irre-

trievably.

"No swordsman!" he shouted. "You lie, you rascal! No swordsman! By God, I fling the words in your face, Frank Audaine; must I send the candlestick after them?" And within the instant he had caught up his weapon and

had hurled himself upon me, sobbing in a depraved fury. I had not moved. The boy spitted himself upon my sword and fell, gasping.

"You will bear me witness, Lord Humphrey," said I, "that the quarrel

was not of my seeking."

But at this juncture the outer door reopened and Dorothy came into the room, preceding Lady Allonby and Mr. George Erwyn. They had followed in the family coach to dissuade the marchioness from her contemplated match by force or by argument, as the cat might jump; and so it came about that my dear mistress and I stared at one another across her brother's lifeless body.

And 'twas in that poignant moment that I first saw her truly. In a storm you have doubtless had some utterly familiar scene leap at you from the darkness under the lash of lightning, and be for that instant made visible and strange; and with much that awful clarity I beheld her now. Formerly her beauty had ensnared me, and this I now perceived to be a fortuitous and happy medley of color and glow and curve, indeed, but nothing more. 'Twas the woman I loved, not her trappings; and her eyes were no more part of her than were the jewels in her ears. But the lovely mirth of her, the brave heart, the clean soul, the girl herself, how good and generous and kind and tender-'twas this that I now beheld, and knew that this, too, was lost; and in beholding, the little love of yesterday fled whimpering before the sacred passion that had possessed my being. And I began to laugh.

"My dear," said I, "'twas to-night that you promised me your answer; and to-night you observe in me alike your grandfather and your brother's mur-

derer."

Lady Allonby fell to wringing her hands, but my adored Dorothy had knelt beside the prostrate form and was inspecting the ravages of my fratricidal sword. "'Mph!" says she immediately, wrinkling as to her saucy nose, "had none of you the sense to perceive that Gerald was tipsy? And as for the wound, 'tis only a scratch here on the

left shoulder. Get water, somebody." And her commands being obeyed, she cleansed the wound composedly and bandaged it with the ruffle of her petticoat.

Meantime we hulking men clustered around her, fidgeting and foolishly gaping, like a basket of fish; and presently a sibilance of relief went about our circle as Gerald opened his eyes. "Sister," says he, with a profoundly tragic face, "remember that I died to avenge the honor of our family."

"To avenge a fiddlestick!" said my adored Dorothy. And, rising, she confronted me, a tinted statuette of decision. "Now, Frank," says she, "I would like to know the meaning of this nonsense."

And, thereupon, for the second time, I recounted the dreadful and huddled

action of the night.

When I had ended, "The first thing," says she, "is to let grandmother out of that room within. The second is to show me the parson." This was done; the dowager entered in an extremity of

sulkiness, and the parson, on being pointed out, lowered his eyes and intensified his complexion.

"As I anticipated," says my charmer, "you are, one and all, a parcel of credulous infants. 'Tis a parson, indeed, but merely the parson out of Mr. Vanbrugh's 'Relapse'; only last Monday we heartily commended your fine performance, sir. Why, Frank, the man is a play-actor, not a priest."

"I fancy," Mr. Vanringham here interpolates, "that I owe the assembled company some modicum of explanation. 'Tis true that at the beginning of our friendship I had contemplated matrimony with our amiable marchioness, but I confess that 'twas the lady's property rather than her person that was the allure. And reflection dissuaded me; a legal union left me, a young and not unhandsome man, irrevocably fettered to an old woman; a mock marriage afforded an eternal option to abrogate the match-for a consideration-with her relatives, to whom I had instinctively divined our union would prove distasteful. Accordingly, I

availed myself of our friend Quarmby's skill in the portrayal of clerical types, rather than resort to any parson whose authority was unrestricted by the footlights. And accordingly——"

"And accordingly, my marriage," I

interrupted, "is not binding?"
"I can assure you," he replied, "that

you might trade your lawful right in the lady yonder for a two-penny whistle and not lose by the bargain."

"And my marriage?" says the marchioness. "The marriage which was never to be legalized, you jumping-jack!—'twas merely that you might sell me afterward, like so much mutton, was it, sir?"

But I spare you her ensuing gloss upon this text.

I rode homeward in the coach with Dorothy at my side and Gerald recumbent upon the front seat. The boy, in the most friendly fashion, fell noisily asleep after a minute's driving.

"And you have not," I immediately asserted—"after all, you have not given me the answer which was to-night to decide whether I, of all mankind, be the most fortunate or the most miserable. And 'tis nearing twelve."

"What choice have I?" she murmured. "After to-night, is it not doubly apparent that you need some one to take care of you? And, besides, I have been in love with you for seven whole weeks."

My heart stood still. And shall I confess that for an instant my wits, too, paused to play the gourmand with my emotions? She sat beside me in the darkness, you conceive, waiting, mine to touch. And everywhere the world was filled with beautiful, kind people, and overhead God smiled down upon His world, and a careless seraph yonder had left open the door of heaven so that quite a deal of its splendor flooded the world about us. And the snoring of Gerald was now inaudible, because of a stately music that was playing somewhere.

"Frank!" she breathed. And I knew that her lips were no less tender than her voice.



ON THE NORTHBOUND, Dec. 18. Mr. Daniel Creswell,

Creswell-Dunbar Ranch, Clarendon,

My DEAR DAN: It seems very wonderful to be whirling so far away. The basket of fruit isn't gone, though I've put the poor "butcher" out of business, giving apples and bananas to the babies who cried. I can't bear hearing a baby cry; they seem desperately helpless little things, but, after all, the bare blade of a shriek is about as formidable a weapon as any I know. Thank you for the fruit, Dan, but I do wish your manners had been prettier-I mean when you said good-by! I know you thought you were behaving like an early Christian, and possibly you would have appeared quite innocuous to an outsider; however, I knew that inwardly you were a ravening wolf. Why will you make me refuse you at every crisis in my life?

I must say you looked-what shall I say? "Comely" is rather a tame word, and "handsome" suggests an Italian "Nice"? No, no: nor "good," either-indeed, you looked anything but "good" with that melancholy glitter in your eye! You know what I mean-you looked that overpowering masculine something, as you stood in the little station, with your bronzed face and your high-spurred boots, and the melancholy glitter in your eye. And I thank you very much for wishing me a happy holiday, and saying in solemn tones that shook how glad you were that the school board had granted me an extra two weeks. I'm very sorry I laughed when you made those remarks, looking mournfully meanwhile at the prairied universe, so gray and bleak in the early winter morning. I didn't mean to laugh, Dan.

Won't it be a glorious month! You, who've been everywhere—even to Australia and Buddha-Gaya and Brobdingnag and the Canary Islands-can speak without a tremor of the journey from Texas to Philadelphia. But you haven't been teaching little Nestors to read and write and wash their faces, from eight o'clock until three, for four steady years. I am just as gleeful as if it were the first trip I'd ever made! But joy is never perfect, Dan. If only you hadn't asked me to marry you, as we rode from Aunt Ella's to the station that last morning! It was so good of you to come by for me and save the boys the trip-but five o'clock in the morning is such an uncanny time to talk about marrying. And if only I hadn't seen you galloping away like a Remington cowboy, instead of a well-conducted ranchman who had shone in London ballrooms! If only you had looked back once as the train moved out-and, oh, Dan! if only you had charitably veiled that melancholy glitter in your eye! You see, Dan, despite the basket of fruit, you've made me almost unhappy.

Dan, Dan, great-hearted, fearless Dan; broad and even as the plains, strong and free as the wind that sweeps across them, tender as the prairie sky—Dan, Dan, big Dan—can it be that you of all men are jealous—vaguely jealous?

Yes, Adele has a brother, and Adele loves me very dearly; but Adele and this stranger relative may have widely differing tastes. It does not follow that the whole family will want to adopt me when they see me. The Cobertons feel an absurd gratitude for my manipula-

tion of Adele's bridle-rein the day her little pony attempted to make a running jump into Troublesome Cañon, and take Adele along; while her pretty visiting escort and mine sat mute in their saddles, surprised and appreciative spectators. I'm always glad you'd proposed to me the night before-otherwise you might have been along on that memorable occasion and taken all the glory by brute force. Then, possibly, you, instead of me, would be going to Philadelphia to-day. But I shouldn't have been jealous, Dan-never, never. Write me that you aren't jealous-quick! And send me nice, friendly letters-don't stiffen them with that formality you always use after these little rehearsals of ours. You know I like you, Dan, but despite your six feet two inches of manhood, which distinctly appeal to me, and your many thousand acres of prairieland, which make my place as mistress in a little red brick schoolhouse seem a somewhat paltry eminence, I don't want to marry you, Dan-I don't, I don't. Twenty-two isn't very old, and there are so many men in the world whom I haven't seen. How can any girl be sure of her affinity when she is acquainted with so small a portion of male humanity?

You see, Dan, I want to be sure. Good-by; when you get this I shall have cast off my wild identity of the plains, and I trust you won't refer to it.

> Always your friend, Rose Hastings.

CHESTNUT HILL, PHILADELPHIA,

Dear Dan: In the time-honored language of the newly arived, I reached here safe and sound. Letters from Aunt Ella and Fannie Holloway came yesterday—no others. Is Bruin hibernating with the sulks?

Doctor Coberton and Adele met me in Philadelphia. Adele is prettier than ever. They say her six months on the Abernathys' ranch did her a great deal of good. I wish you would fall in love with Adele, Dan.

Doctor Coberton is a fine-looking old

gentleman-scarcely old, but his manner is so grave from constant dealing with crises that he seems so. Mrs. Coberton was awaiting us at the Germantown station. Dan, she is charmingwith prematurely white hair, sweet brown eyes, and the gentlest, kindliest reserve of manner. She makes me think, somehow, of white hyacinths. We drove to their home on Chestnut Hill, and, as it was almost dark, much of the mansion's outer beauty, and the immensity of the fine grounds about it, were lost on me until the next morning. But the quiet glory of the home interior filled my dreams all night. Never have I seen so much wealth crystallized in such per ect and harmonious beauty.

Adele look me up to my room at

"I know you're tired," she said. "You must lie down and rest before dinner."

I bundled up in a pink robe she gave me and sat down on the couch.

I looked at Adele.

"I u..derstand," she observed wisely, "but you can't see them till you rest."

"I can't rest till I see them," I said. Now, Dan, you didn't suppose I meant to conquer the East with the contents of that little trunk you lifted out of the buckboard with one arm? If you know my salary, and will multiply it by four times nine months, subtracting the price of Florinda and my sensible garb, you will know almost exactly how much I gave Adele to concoct me a wardrobe for this one month!

Dan, what will I do when I'm an old lady and need white caps?

Oh, Dan, you see how dreadfully I longed to live for just one month! "Let me see them, Adele, please," I

said.

So Adele opened the closet door and laid them out, one by one.

Dan, Dan, if only you were a woman, that I might recount to you each exquisite lace edge, every chiffon billow, all the blended tints of ruby and gold! Oh, Dan, there are little shoes, with long-waisted heels, to match every dress—and the opera-cloak is nothing but a bounteous glory of lace and white satin. If a summer cloud were lined with

swan's-down and perfumed with orange flowers, it would not be sweeter to fold oneself in, Dan.

"Nobody knows anything about it, except mother. She helped me so

much," said Adele.

I put my arms about her neck and

kissed her twice on each cheek.

"And now," said she, "you must lie down." She stopped at the door. "Dinner is at eight," she said. "I will send a maid to you—and wear the yellow

gown, please."

Now, Dan, it is only circumstances that bring out our real character. I am extremely, extraordinarily, atrociously vain! And I didn't know it till I got on that yellow gown. It is a pale gold satin, so pale, indeed, that it looks like moonbeams on water. My hair was parted and piled high. My neck and arms were bare, and I wore a necklace of Brazilian topaz that shone like a string of stars. Dan, I looked like that painting of my great-grandmother, who came from France to New Orleans years ago, and drove men to death and madness for love of her-I really did, Dan; possibly because the necklace had been hers. Dan dear, if you dare to doubt my words, I'll wear that yellow gown when I come home!

I waited awhile for Adele; then, remembering the way to the parlors, I

went down.

What is it in one's own name, heard suddenly, that arrests the blood and sharpens every sense? I swept down the wide stairs, thinking only of the soft rustle of my silken dress, and its sweet accord with the rich surroundings, when I heard Mrs. Coberton's voice in the far parlor. It was a low voice, beautifully modulated, but quite distinct.

"Miss Hastings is a well-bred young woman," she said. Well-bred! Think of it, Dan! I should hope I am.

"I intend Rose to go everywhere I please," came in Adele's pretty soprano tones, colored with unmistakable anger. "Marvin's remarks are nothing to me—but I distinctly resent his interference with my plans. He has actually withdrawn your invitation, mother, to

Harry Sydnor for dinner this evening."

The answer came in a low, even, masculine voice, which I had not heard be-

"I have great respect for Sydnor's opinion, and I withdrew the invitation on learning that we were to have a Wild West show on the premises to-

night."

I was on the last step of the stairway, and I grasped the balustrade stoutly and stood still. Did you ever feel your heart beat in your head? It deafens one for a minute, and I missed Mrs. Coberton's reply to this, but Adele's next words were cut very clear, and I loved her for the tremor in her voice.

"I, as well as Marvin, care for the opinion of my friends. I had almost hoped Rose would like him; I forgot that she isn't accustomed to pretty automatons—wound up to dance and

drawl."

"Adele!" came softly from Mrs. Coberton.

The young man laughed; it was not a bad laugh, Dan, but it was low and

self-confident, and I hated it.
"Oh, very well," he said. "If it will oblige you, I'll appear in a red blanket and spurs to-night. I might whoop instead of drawl, you know."

"Rose is my friend," said Adele; "she

saved my life the day-"

"I beg your pardon," came the man's voice hastily. "I've heard the circusriding story several times."

"Above all, she is a gentlewoman and our guest, and I shall thank you, Mar-

vin, to honor her as such."

It was Mrs. Coberton speaking, and the words not only stopped the discussion, but quieted my own nerves. Ah, Dan, it is an unprofitable thing to eavesdrop, as every one seems to have found out before me. I paused a minute; I heard a tinkle of the piano keys from the room, and, holding my head quite high, I passed down the brightly lighted hall and parted the portières.

Dan dear, if I expected my glorious entrance to awe Mr. Marvin Coberton,

I was disappointed. He stood leaning against the mantel exactly opposite me, and he acknowledged the introduction that followed, with a peculiar air of being charmed and interrupted and absent-minded all at once. He is a well-built youth, with a face clear-cut and absolutely cold. I should like to hold a lighted match under that very nice chin of his and see if he would feel it.

Adele was at the piano, idly trying some music. She called me to her side. "See," she said, "I have some of your songs. You must sing after dinner." And then she added in a whisper: "You

are an angel to-night."

Did you ever hear of a yellowsatined, black-haired angel, Dan? Adele was in a blue dress, as blue as the skies that lean over Clarendon.

At dinner Doctor Coberton asked me many questions concerning the West—intelligent questions, too; nor did he adopt the patronizing tone of most Easterners when making such inquiries—as if they were interrogating an ape on the variety of nuts in his jungle. Some of my Western stories seemed to amuse him. Indeed, they all laughed heartily, except Marvin. He smiled in a preoccupied way several times, and once, while I was talking, he deliberately got out his watch and looked at it. After dinner he went out to make some calls.

And I sang, Dan, I sang every melancholy thing I knew. And when I stopped, Mrs. Coberton murmured that my voice was the sweetest contralto she had ever heard, and that there were tears in the deep notes. Doctor Coberton asked me, with some surprise, where I got my training—a question which was not intelligent, Dan; as if music, as well as manners, cannot come out of

the West.

But, oh, Dan, I shall punish this Marvin Coberton for his scorn! I shall snub him as he has snubbed me, if I have to marry the President and all the members of the Cabinet to achieve a promontory from which to look down. Witness my vow.

Dan, tell the teacher who takes my place for those two weeks—tell her not

to be too hard on the little Griggs boy
—I'm afraid I used to punish him too
much.

Good-by, Dan. Please write to me. Rose.

DECEMBER 24.

DEAR DAN: I love your letter. It smells of the prairie breeze, and the stretch of plains, and the big embrace of blue horizon. I thank you for it, Dan.

Oh, I'm having such a good time! I've almost forgotten Clarendon and you and the poor little red schoolhouse. Dan, please see that the boys feed Florinda every day. And if they don't exercise her, I'll never forgive them.

We go day and night—I can't begin to tell you all until I see you. There are dinners and dances and operas and rides and drives and receptions—and,

once in a great while, naps.

I suppose you know Miss Leiter, my substitute, is ill, and that my vacation is consequently curtailed of its extra two There is no one to take my weeks. Fannie Holloway's letter, with place. this grave news, lay at my plate this morning. The Cobertons seemed really quite sorry. I love them all-with the exception of Marvin. I have decided that to snub him effectually in the end, I must not ignore him at the offset, but amiably lead up to it-hurling my scorn finally, like one of Jove's own thunderbolts, from a placid April sky. I have passed him many times in the halls, and he always bows deferentially to my feet, which are so prettily shod that I feel sure they repay his attentions. Last night he brought Harry Sydnor out to dinner. Perhaps he considers that the Wild West show is worthy, after all, of a gentleman spec-Mr. Sydnor is from Virginia. He and I were friends from the start. He is a good-looking young man, with a fine fund of wit and good-humor, and a bearing of exquisite courtesy, which seems as sincere as it is charming. We went to the opera afterward-"Siegfried"; it was glorious!-and outside the box Marvin Coberton held my cloak for me-my billowy, beautiful cloakand, Dan-Dan-I don't believe he even

saw my shoulders!

To-night, when we had gone up to our rooms, Adele came in. She had on a loose robe of lace and ribbon, and she looked like a luxurious fairy. crawled up on my bed-I was brushing my hair.

"Well, my dear 'Sensation of the Hour," she remarked at length, "you've stolen another lover from somebody." Our eyes met in the glass. "Harry Sydnor says you are the most beautiful woman he ever saw."

Now, I couldn't believe this, being not so irresistible when brushing my hair as in the yellow gown.

"Except?" I said.

"Except no one," answered Adele. "So I've come in here to murder you in your bed." She put out an adorable slippered foot and looked at it.

"I'm so proud of you," she remarked. Then, apropos of nothing, "I wish my brother were like Harry Sydnor," she

said.

There were apology and appeal in the blue deeps of her eyes, and I grew busy with an impromptu snarl in my hair. I am afraid the social training of the West is a course deficient in some respects. I wanted to say something, for I love Adele, but I could only worry with the snarl.

"I know you're sleepy," she remarked at length, sliding off the bed, "and I am, too." She stopped at the doorway. "Hang up your stocking, Rose," she said. "It's Christmas eve."

It's Christmas eve, Dan, but why should I hang my stocking up? the broad prairies, and the wide, blue sky, and Florinda, go into one stocking? And there's nothing else I want in all the world.

The clock is striking twelve. Good night-good night-a Merry Christmas, Dan. ROSE.

DECEMBER 30. My DEAR DAN: I got your telegram, saying the new teacher would be there in time. I'm glad I may stay. Your letter was so funny. Yes, I will punish Lord Marvin-be sure I willif I can. He is thawing the least bit, and I find it less difficult to be amiable with him.

Adele was in bed yesterday. She is worn out with such steady going; they usually make her take things more quietly. I read to her for awhile, and then she fell asleep. I went downstairs to the library to replace the book in its shelf. There I found Mr. Marvin Coberton sitting in the twilight of the room, gazing with deep abstraction at the gas-log. He rose as I came in, and I smiled at him-at him, Dan, not on him, for he amuses me very much, this goodly, well-groomed youth, who likes himself so well. I wish I could see him on Florinda.

I put the book in its place and started

out again.

"Won't you sit down?" he asked, with less of assurance in his tone than he ordinarily employs.

"Why, yes," I answered frankly; "I

Adele is asleep."

And I merged myself with the leather rocker opposite and united my gaze with his on the gas-log. We talked of the most general things, Dan, in the most unimpassioned way. I must say that Adele did him an unjustice in one respect. He speaks very deliberately, but he doesn't drawl.

"I hear," he observed, "that through the South they have fireworks at Christmas. Is this true of the West?"

"Oh, yes," I said; "we are both West and South, you know."

Mr. Coberton did not approve the

"Why not?" I asked. "It is no worse to rejoice hilariously on the anniversary of a Saviour's birth than to desire gifts mercenarily and give them perfunctorily, as some people do in all parts at this time. Christmas was made," I said, "for little children, and if their joy can be expressed through the medium of Roman candles, why not?"

He looked placidly at the fire.

"Does my sister seem very ill?" he asked.

So, you see, Dan, I shall have very

hard work punishing him. I'm afraid he won't know when he's snubbed. Yours faithfully,

Rose.

JANUARY 5.

DEAR DAN: Adele and I began our mad pace again on New-Year's day. Mrs. Coberton is arranging for a dance in the big ballroom up-stairs on next Monday, four days before I start home. The time is going very fast.

How is the new teacher getting on? Fannie writes me that this substitute rides your own Chlorippe to school every morning. Why would you never let me ride Chlorippe? Is Miss Leiter a better horsewoman than I? Fannie says that the new teacher is very fine looking—isn't that nice! And that you are seen at the schoolhouse even more than formerly. Fannie seemed quite amused by her own gossip—I always thought her a friend of mine—and, of course, 'she is—her letter was very

I'm very glad you didn't miss me, Dan—very, very glad; and I—I miss nothing—nothing. I think I should be prepared to discuss affinities now, having met a goodly number of gentlemen.

pleasant, I'm sure.

Why do you speak so little of yourself? I am aware that Aunt Ella and the children are well—I hear from them often.

Where does the new teacher board? Yours very sincerely,

ROSE HASTINGS.

JANUARY 13.

DEAR DAN: At first I laughed.
It was too funny. To think of your standing the exams and teaching those infants in my place. And then—I almost cried. Your letter was the very dearest thing I ever read. I am glad Miss Leiter is out of danger.

Was there really no one but you who could do it—or would do it?

Dan dear, who takes care of the ranch while you are teaching school? And no wonder the "new teacher" rode Chlorippe! I shall settle with Fannie Holloway when I reach home.

When I reach home! How sweet that sounds! I thought it would be hard to go back from this and face the three big blackboards and the many little faces—but it won't, Dan.

The dance is over. There is only one memory I retain of it, besides the vision Adele made: Marvin was very nice to me-as nice as he could be. I suppose. He and I had been cast often into little tête-à-têtes since that evening in the library. They seemed never to be of his seeking, though he bore with them patiently while they endured. At the party he martyred himself to the extent of two dances with me. He said little during the first, finding me and leaving me in a manner grave and perfunctory. But there were others who talked-Harry Sydnor among them. He and I spent one dance in Adele's little parlor on the second floor. We were there when Marvin came to claim me for his second waltz. I was at the piano. We had been singing together in low voices, and chatting of Adele. Harry is very much in love. Marvin stood regarding us in silence, as if to say: "Well, Squaw of the West, I am here."

Harry went out, and my fingers continued to move idly over the keys. Marvin leaned an elbow on the piano. "Sing," he said.

I looked at him. "I am tired of singing," I answered. I had decided that morning that I would snub him tonight, whether he knew it or not. My gown was very pretty, Dan—it was white, and I wore the string of pearls that the Cobertons had given me Christmas. I rose from my seat with a soft rustle. Marvin did not move.

"If it is just the same to you," he said, "I should like to remain where we are."

I turned to him. "Oh," I said, "is this our dance?"

I knew that it was, Dan, but it was part of the snub.

"Yes," he replied; "is it true that you are going on Friday?"

"Yes—I'm very sorry, too. I've grown so fond of your parents and your sister." "Then why must you go?"

"Because," I said, "I've signed a contract to teach in a little prairie school.

I make my living by it."

"I am sorry you are going," he said, very much as he would say, "I have read the morning paper;" and then, Dan, he asked me to marry him, quite as if he would ask me if I did not want to read the paper, too.

Dan, I sat down. I am awfully ashamed to tell it. I sat down; there is such an advantage in standing up at a moment of that sort, but I never do calculate effects at the proper time. I sat down and looked at him, and I noticed that his evelid twitched strangely.

"Perhaps," he said-"perhaps you had better think it over before you answer me-don't answer me now," he

said.

"I think, Mr. Coberton," I replied, "that I may as well answer you now as at any time." I looked at him frankly. His own nervousness put me strangely at ease.

"No," he said, with a gesture that

begged me to wait.

'Very well," I replied; "as you please." He leaned forward.

"Tell me," he said, "do you love some one else?"

I raised my eyes, and, for the first time in my life, I knew; I was sure,

"Yes," I said.

He drew a deep breath, then he went over to the window and stood there a long time with his face turned from me, Up-stairs the measured notes of a waltz rose and fell faintly. He came back at length.

"I am very sorry," he said, "that I should have given you the pain of this

I don't know why, Dan, but I held out my hand. He took it-his own was

very cold.

"I wish you every happiness that could possibly come to you," he said: and his voice was the most beautiful thing I ever heard.

I thanked him, and he went with me up-stairs, and it was not until I was in bed that night that I remembered I had planned to snub him, whether he knew

My big, new trunk is packed, and the fine clothes are going to Texas. It has all been very lovely, Dan, but-but I am sure at last-so sure, indeed, that I sha'n't be altogether happy till I reach

Dan dear, do you think you can wait till June? Rose.



EPITOME

ROSE leaf breaking through the earth, A bird's nest sudden filled with mirth, A heart with joy of beating rife,-And this is all we know of Life.

A rosebud's fragrant blossoming, An early bird-call in the Spring, A heart in tune with flower and dove.-And this is all we know of Love.

A rose whose withered petals fall, A silent bird that hears no call, A heart too still for one least breath.-And this is all we know of Death.

CHARLOTTE BECKER.





N the wicker depths of a tall chair sat one possessed of a demure face, more bronze hair than she needed and eyes which got her—and, incidentally, certain others—into a

good deal of trouble. That was Dorothy. And it was something of a triumph over the rest of human nature

to be just Dorothy.

Bruce Clayton, sitting on the porch steps, jerked a tolerant countenance at two diminutive and ornate items that projected beyond the edge of Dorothy's skirt.

"And you want to fuss those feet of yours up in something more substantial than a buckle and a bow to-morrow. Mountain trails aren't Persian rugs. Such foolish-looking feet!"

Dorothy thrust her abused members forward and looked solemnly from them

to Clayton.

"I find them very useful," she asserted, disciplining her dimples.

"To trample on men's hearts?" smiled Clayton, grimly.

Dorothy shook her head.

"They don't like such hard and stony paths."

Clayton gave a diluted grunt.

"Well, try to borrow some *shoes* for to-morrow. Comfortable old ones, you know; why women will—"

"They don't. Tight shoes are as ob-

solete as-as broken hearts."

"Right you are. Time was when a woman's heart was capable of being broken. Nowadays it's so thickly bandaged with material ambition that emotion never reaches it."

Dorothy wrinkled her nose at Clay-

ton.

"I wish you wouldn't say such

things."

"Why not?" asked Clayton, bluntly.
"For obvious reasons; chiefly because you don't mean them."

"Goodness! Must I confine myself to things I do mean?" he asked, with

whimsical meekness.

Dorothy shrugged her shoulders.

"Insincerity doesn't harmonize with you at all. Besides," she added, with a crooked little smile which scratched men's hearts, "you aren't clever enough to make your insincerities convincing."

Clayton's eyes suddenly probed her own with a flash of inner comprehension. In their piercing intentness she felt a conviction and an ardent wish she could not interpret.

"H'm!" observed Clayton. "H'm!"

"Well?" queried Dorothy.

"Oh," said Clayton, carelessly, "I was just wishing you could see underneath yourself as clearly as you sometimes see underneath others."

The man spoke idly, but there had crept into his voice a quiet significance that baffled Dorothy; his face was casual, but the eyes that searched her own were penetrating and wistful.

"I don't understand." Dorothy shook

her head like a puzzled child.

"No," said Clayton, slowly. "No, of course you don't. You don't understand yourself and your own possibilities, but some time you will, and then the whole past will seem to you but a preliminary to that moment."

Dorothy was silent. There came over her the uneasiness that assails one on discovering an entirely unexpected phase in another. She suddenly realized that life held subtle moments beyond the solution of her ready intui-

tion. The discovery gave her an unpleasant sense of insecurity.

"Tell me," she said, lightly, "who is going on this perilous mountain trip."

Clayton told her.

"And who," asked Dorothy, "is Mary
Lennox?"

Clayton glanced at her a moment and hesitated.

"Why, she's the daughter of old Winfield Lennox, who got so unpleasantly mixed up with that trust failure a year ago. The papers were full of it, remember? She's visiting the Carringtons. Mighty fine girl! I think you'll like her."

"I won't," sighed Dorothy, mischievously, "if you like her too much."

Clayton chuckled.

"I do like her—a whole lot." He spoke emphatically. "Well," he added, abruptly seizing his hat, "I'm off. I'll call for you to-morrow at ten. Chloroform your vanity and wear old clothes. No fluttering birds of paradise need apply for mountain trails." He nodded and swung up the road.

The day was one of azure, and ozone, and sweet, earthy odors. Dorothy forged through the underbrush with the elemental abandon of one who knew not rugs and upholstery. She seemed a bit of the wildness about her. A vine was tossed about her neck; a cluster of berries lay in the hair that defied order and callous hearts. She was one of those who could take on the color of their surroundings without sacrificing their individuality.

Dorothy had floated easily through life; she knew no law save her own spontaneous self, and since she was made up of delectable parts, the world was well pleased and troubled not itself to probe for more substantial virtues. Society didn't look to Dorothy for heroics; it was enough to see the moralizing of the wise, the epigrams of the clever and the finesse of the experienced avail nothing when exposed by her effortless witchery. And Dorothy was lovable. Her tact knew no subtle designs of diplomacy, her sympathy was no automa-

ton of conscience, and her social adaptability was no labored effort of vanity seeking satisfaction.

Dorothy's complex temperament, with its versatile needs of expression, revolted from the judicial control of a rather logical brain. Her every act was a victory of intuition over reason. She was the victim of a dramatic instinct which sensitively responded to the situation of the moment. She unconsciously adjusted herself to the dimensions of the occasion. Such a one discovers in herself only such qualities as circumstance reveals.

The party had left their automobiles at the inn, near the foot of the mountain, where they had stopped for a late lunch. They were to climb the mountain to gain the view which made it locally famous, and return in the early exercises.

evening.

Dorothy, who had come and was to return with Clayton, had seen little of him since leaving his car. This partly because there were other masculine ones in need of discipline, and partly because she wished to disarm the minds of some who assumed a significant reason for Clayton's brusque and impersonal attentions to her.

As for Dorothy, experience had taught her not to be duped by four months' unswerving devotion, and she had expended some skill in postponing the unpleasant half hour which she felt might come with Clayton. Until then, however, she would treat him as she did the rest of mankind-which was a way not abounding in spiritual consolation, and, therefore, not to be divulged. For, as Dorothy reminded herself in certain fractious moments, when Clayton's obvious imperfections obtruded themselves among the possibilities of Dorothy's future, he did not come up to her ideals, and that settled it. Only, it didn't. Was it ever known to?

Dorothy, skimming lightly over knotty tree roots and half-rotted stumps, found herself wondering wherein lay Mary Lennox's intangible charm. The girl's manner was quietly aloof, her smile rare but wonderfully illuminating. Her naturally serene eyes were

veiled with mystery and vague unrest. When they met Clayton's, as Dorothy had occasion during lunch to note that they often did, they became quietly content. And Clayton, Dorothy noticed, watched Mary Lennox with an interest obvious to one familiar with his impersonal manner. Once when his eyes met hers across the table, he smiled at her understandingly. Since luncheon the two had been constantly together. Their evident absorption excluded the rest of the world.

Dorothy, noting, wondered. The day had scarcely fulfilled her buoyant anticipations. For one thing, Clayton's cheerful and unprotesting accommodation to her elimination of him from her society had hardly figured in the day's reckoning. And Clayton, as Dorothy well knew, was not complex enough to assume an attitude of indifference. He was simply absorbed in Mary Lennox.

It was the girl's fervent voice with its thrill of emotion when she spoke to Clayton, her mysterious eyes whose wistfulness clarified into deep trust as they met his and rested there content, which hinted to Dorothy disturbing suggestions.

Dorothy busied herself dealing out tantalizing moments to uncomfortable mortals made after the image of man. Her emotions were too nebulous to crystallize into a conviction.

Owing to some oversight of destiny, Dorothy had just put in a dreary half hour with young Burton. She had, somehow, got stranded with him on the loneliest and prettiest stretch of the trail. He was a mild, acquiescent young person, with gentle, hesitating manners. Dorothy declared his ideas had been procured at a department store. His soft, mealy voice sifted out on the summer air.

"Yes," he was saying, "this has been such a pleasant occasion, a happy break in the monotony of office work. Yes, I do spend a good deal of time in the office, but my work is most interesting—we place patents on the market, you know. The last one we are handling is a most clever contrivance, quite an ingenious triumph over mechanism. It's

a window fastener—it works from a steel spring set in the casing, and a burglar would find it quite impossible to manipulate it from outside. Are you interested in mechanism? A most original can opener came in the other days—"

Can opener, indeed! Dorothy groaned in spirit. It was like him to pick out the most witchingly romantic spot in the whole mountain, where the fern brake bent to the breeze and the gold sunshine filtered through the lacy treetops and lay in gleaming patches on the brown path—to pick out such a spot and enlarge on—can openers! She wished he had swallowed a button when he was a baby.

"I'd like to take you into our exhibit room some day. I think you'd be interested——"

"'Sh-h-h!" Dorothy cut him off, abruptly. She stood listening. "I thought," she said, "I heard voices over there in the underbrush. I was probably mistaken. Let's hurry on and join the others; we're 'way behind."

She set a brisk pace. The path grew so narrow they were obliged to walk singly. The silence imposed by the slight separation was grateful to Dorothy. Her brain was a chaos of interrogation. Suddenly she paused—her eyes widened. Beyond, on the edge of the path, with his back to her, stood Clayton. He was bending over Mary Lennox, who sat on a stone. Her face was lifted to his, and the look in it held Dorothy hesitating for the instant between retreat and casual advance. Clayton's hand was on the girl's shoul-They neither saw nor heard Dor-Then Clayton's voice, deep and vibrating with feeling, startled Dorothy. "But you will; tell me you will--" he

paused. "I'm waiting," he said, gently.
Mary Lennox's eyes lifted to his. She
hesitated. A trembling breath escaped
her. "I wil," she said, quietly; and
Dorothy thought she had never seen
such trust in human eyes.

When Dorothy passed them a moment later a faint color swept over Mary Lennox's face.

"We're just resting a little," she

smiled, and her smile challenged the

sunlight.

Clayton seemed scarcely to see Dorothy. She passed him with a curious sensation of numbness. As she and Burton pushed along the trail, Dorothy interspersed ignoring silences with spurts of rushing animation that caused the poor fellow's brain to stumble after her in helpless confusion.

The trail, which led through a labyrinth of shade, turned off to the right, wound for a little distance down the summit and brought them abruptly to a wide, rocky ledge which projected like a great shelf from the side of the mountain. They stepped suddenly out upon a smiling world of light. They found that all the party except Clayton and Mary Lennox had preceded them.

The rock overhanging the serene blue valley beneath revealed a scene of such beauty as silences any but the most commonplace mind. Burton essayed a few trite exclamations. Dorothy sat with her hands clasped. Every detail of sunlight and shadow on the purple stretch of hills opposite, the slight thread of river curving through the valley, the patches of golden oat fields, the sweep of the rve, the cows dotted on a slope, the stiff white houses huddled in the village, all burned themselves scorchingly on her brain, and yet she was not conscious of seeing them. Her memory throbbed with an incident which knew no such setting. Only the dingiest and most usual of waiting rooms in a country station. She and Clayton had attended some private theatricals at the summer home of some friends. They missed their train returning. The carriage had been dismissed, the station agent napped stubbornly behind closed doors, there was no telephone. Nothing to do but wait fifty minutes for the next train. night was cold and drizzly. Dorothy, in her light wrap, shivered in the bleak little station. Clayton swept off his coat and wrapped it close about her; then he folded his arms tightly as he stood looking down at her. Dorothy, glancing up at him, caught her breath. The man's very soul had swept into his face. His heart burned in his

eves

"What makes you fold your arms like that?" The words had stumbled over a little catch in Dorothy's throat.

Clayton drew a deep breath. "They are safer so," he said, as if

to himself.

It had never been quite the same between Dorothy and Clayton since then. Behind all the impersonal generalities of speech and manner there lurked the reminiscence of one revealing moment. If she had ever believed in a man's sincerity, she had believed then in Clay-

ton's. Now--

When Clayton and Miss Lennox joined the party they sat near Dorothy. After the little interruption the silence of beauty, like a gentle benediction, settled on them all. Dorothy noted the deep serenity in the girl's face. Between her and Clayton she divined an understanding for which words were a crude medium. Dorothy compelled herself to glance at Clayton. He looked past her with unseeing eyes. Her head lifted regally. It was the first real humiliation of her girlhood.

The party left the ledge in that first soft twilight that combines all the tangible charm of the day with the elusiveness of night. Its tender revealing stole for the first time over Dorothy. As they reached the downward trail Clayton joined Dorothy. She suddenly remembered that she was to return in his car. He paused for the others to

pass.

"I want to speak to you just a moment. It's about Miss Lennox; she's going home to-morrow, and——" he paused, confusedly, at Dorothy's impassive face. "I—the circumstances are such I'd like to take her home in my car. You won't mind returning with Clarence Burton? I've already spoken to him—I'll explain later."

Dorothy's eyes met his squarely.

"No explanation is necessary," she said. The words were peculiarly distinct and colorless. She felt helpless in her indignation.

"Dorothy!" Clayton's voice stung

her bewilderingly.

"Miss Lennox, I think, is waiting for you." Dorothy's eyes were dismissing. Clayton started to speak, and suddenly stopped. Burton had joined

them.

"I am more than delighted at this happy turn of fate which gives me the great pleasure—" he began, with a limp flourish of the body. Dorothy didn't hear what followed. Clayton forced her eyes to his. The reproach and pain in them haunted her most of the evening. He silently lifted his cap and joined Miss Lennox.

Dorothy never knew exactly how she and Clarence Burton reached the foot of the mountain. She was conscious only of a vast stretch of time, and of having talked a good deal. She couldn't remember what she had said. When they reached the inn the last pale remnant of twilight lingered on the night's

coming.

"Why," exclaimed Burton, glancing about, "we're completely deserted. Our machine is the only one left. There goes Clayton's car now. Blessed if he isn't turning off on the valley road! I wonder why he does that?"

"It's longer," murmured Dorothy, un-

consciously.

"Of course," agreed Burton, who saw in that no explanation. "And it's dark, too; nasty dip down there by the bridge just before it joins the main road. The moon is going to be overcast," he continued, glancing overhead. "I'm afraid it's fixing for rain. We'll have a darkish night, after all. Won't you sit down while I get the machine ready?"

Dorothy sat on a stump and idly watched Burton tinker with his car. She found it unnaturally easy to respond to his unsuggestive stabs at conversation. Usually he made her brain feel wooden. To-night his lack of personality failed to penetrate her numb consciousness.

"Now she's ready," said Burton; "if we keep to the main road I think we can beat Clayton, despite his start and

his four cylinders."

As they sped along the dim, white road, Dorothy seemed electrically stimulated into a necessity for expression which knew no dependence on personal inspiration. With feverish agility her brain cut out conversational byways for Burton, made tactful openings through which he was rapturously pulled, and so cleverly ignored his mental limitations when in a moment of consciousness it stumbled upon them, that Burton was dazed by his own possibilities.

In a fleeting moment of silence Dorothy felt the blood pounding through her head, but she herself seemed outside all physical realities. Her own body, Burton's car, the villages through which they sped, the fences and trees flying by—these were not real.

A sudden report, followed by a whistling sound, and the throbbing, abrupt stopping of the car, jerked her back to the actualities of the moment.

"Mercy! what's happened?"

"One of the rear tires is punctured," said Burton, peering anxiously over the side of the car.

"And can't we go on with it flat? We must be quite near home now."

"We can, if we have to. But there's a stretch of new macadam a little beyond, and it will ruin the shoe beyond possibility of repair."

"Haven't you an extra tire with you?" Dorothy became suddenly prac-

tical.

"Sorry to say, I haven't," answered Burton, dolefully. He got out and glanced gloomily up and down the road, then looked suddenly relieved.

"I'll tell you," he said, brightening, "there's a little house about a third of a mile back. We'll go see if I can borrow a jack there, and I may be able to fix it; if not, we'll have to run home very slowly on a flat tire."

Burton extended his hand to help Dorothy out of the car. She looked

puzzled.

"Why don't we run the car back

there?" she asked.

"Because the house isn't on the road. It's up a miserable, hilly little lane. I can't take the car up there very well, and there's no use damaging the tire for such a little distance."

Dorothy hesitated. Solitude, she

thought, would be grateful.

"I think," she said, "I'll just stay in the car, if you don't mind. I'm not a bit afraid," she answered, in response to his uneasy look.

"But I don't like to leave you alone,"

Burton demurred.

"It's all right. No one will steal me, and if they try, I'll open the throttle, and, b-z-z-z, away I'll go."

"But you don't know how," smiled

Burton.

"Don't I, though? Bruce Clayton had a steam car before he got that gasoline affair. I ran it five miles once, see?" Dorothy leaned over the throt-

"Don't!" exclaimed Burton, nervously. "My car is quite different from Clayton's old one."

Dorothy laughed.

"Hurry up and get your old jack," she said, imperiously.

"Well, if you insist-" hesitated Burton.

"I do. Good-by."

She turned and nodded to him reassuringly as he walked briskly up the road. As she settled comfortably in the car, she became suddenly conscious that she had a body, and that it was very tired. A long sigh trembled through her. It was good to be alone. Ahead of her the road pointed into shadow. Down the hill to the left lay the valley. The silence invaded her soothingly. A light breeze stirred up faint odors of wild clematis. Over her stole a tender realization. The night, she felt, was infinite and understood.

The fury of wounded pride, which told her that Clayton had deliberately cheapened her, had passed, leaving a mute recognition of larger revelations. She knew that life, though externally the same, would ever after be inwardly different. The day had projected her beyond all former limitations of herself

into limitless possibilities.

With the realization, a nameless, almost irresistible longing surged over her, and after it swept a helpless flooding sense of permanent and remote aloofness from all the satisfying realities of life. Had she, perhaps, more to give to life than life would ever require of her? She closed her eyes on the thought. She opened them as if upon a new interpretation of life's significance, and they chanced idly upon a dull red glow, a mere dot of light that gleamed faintly in the valley's cup of shadow.

Burton had left his car just above the point where the valley road joined the main road at an acute angle. The valley road led from the main road down a sharp hill over the brook, and swept up an opposite incline, turning

into a level stretch to the left.

From her elevated position Dorothy could dimly see the hill opposite, and look down on the bridge at its foot. The night was so dark that the outline of the bridge was barely discernible, but as Dorothy looked, with apathetic indifference, the dull red light gleamed upon her with sudden revealing. It was a lantern, she told herself, swung across the middle of the bridge. The bridge, for some reason, was unsafe. The lantern was a signal to warn possible crossers of danger.

"The bridge is closed, probably for repairs," thought Dorothy, indifferently, and, as she looked, the red light suddenly flickered and went out.

"To-o-o-t!—toot—toot!"
Dorothy started. That was Clayton's horn! No one else gave that peculiar signal. He had taken the valley road!

For an instant her brain remained paralyzed, while through it flashed suc-

cessive realizations.

Clayton would come down that hill heading straight for the bridge. Clayton-and the woman Clayton loved. Love-it was the greatest thing in the world. She knew now. Even on a bright night the approach to the bridge was dark, owing to the dense, bushy growth of the roadside. To-night the most careful driver might run upon the bridge before its danger was revealed, and Clayton, she remembered, was not a particularly careful driver.

Then, with cruel revealing, there swept by her her own pretty, useless little past; a past in which only her lightest thoughts and emotions had risen to the surface of expression: a past unflavored by one sacrifice, one responsibility; there flashed upon her Clayton's quiet, simple life, with its sturdy purposefulness, its true standard. That was what life was for. To live up to your possibilities—not underneath them, the way she had done.

"T-o-o-t-toot-toot-toot."

Clayton was nearing the bridge. Clayton—and the woman Clayton loved.

Ah! Now she knew! She must somehow reach the bridge before Clayton, and point her car's revealing lights upon the danger in time for Clayton to

stop short of it.

She sprang for the brake and threw it off. God help her! Would the car work like that other? She opened the throttle, the car jumped; she seized the steering gear, rounded the corner safely, threw wide the throttle, sped down the hill. She was almost near enough now. The brake! She grasped it wildly. It would not work.

The room was dim with timid, gray gleams of dawn. Dorothy came into vague consciousness of a sore and aching body. Her head seemed to be floating about the room. Then blackness swept over her.

The room was a paler gray when she opened her eyes again. Certain objects took on convincing lines of reality. Her head throbbed madly with pain. cold something slipped over her fore-

"Yes, please-a little more ice-another cloth-thanks."

Her memory groped feebly for illumination. She remembered now-there was an automobile, and a bridge-and -was she, then-alive? She started as she heard her voice ask the question.

"Yes. Thank God!"

That voice! Her swimming head turned weakly on the pillow. She saw the dim figure of a man sitting near her. His hand stroked hers gently. His face seemed gray—like the light in the room. There had been-othersshe remembered, connected with the bridge and the crash.

"And—the others?" she whispered.

"Safe, little one, thanks to you, Oh, it was like you to do it! Not to think of yourself; just to fling away your very life to block our danger-and you might have been killed, little onekilled."

Little one! Who was it, who? Perhaps, after all, she wasn't going to live. It didn't matter much. She felt herself wrapped in a tender assurance. She had lived one moment that made dying worth while.

"And will I live?" she asked, faintly. The man's hand closed convulsively

"Yes! God-if you hadn't! You escaped with a broken arm and a few bruises. The doctor has just left, and we expect to take you home in a few hours; shall I tell you just a bit about it? You see, you steered crooked, just grazed the end of the bridge and swung off into the bushes. The car tipped, and you were thrown out-off to one side, and probably struck first on your head. You've been more or less unconscious ever since we picked you up, but the doctor said that was to be expected. We brought you to this little house up the road."

"Oh!"

She could not place the voice. Her ear seemed to have no memory. When that pale streak of light creeping through the shutters grew strong and bright, the mist, she felt, would clear from her brain, and she would know all she wished. She was too weak now to struggle with it. A warm hand passed gently as a woman's to and fro over her own. The touch of it made her strangely, quietly happy.

"Burton and Miss Lennox found a doctor," the voice went on. "They waited to know everything was all right, and they've just gone home. They telephoned your people. Poor Mary! She's so unstrung, after all she's been through to-day. She needs a doctor herself. I hope Mitchell will

take her abroad soon.'

"M-itchell?"

"Yes, 'the man to whom she's en-

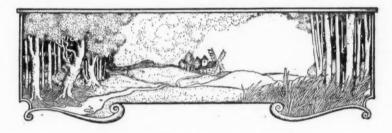
gaged. Didn't I tell you? When her father got implicated with this trust scandal, she insisted upon calling the whole thing off-wouldn't marry Mitchell, she said, until her father was cleared of all suspicion. Mitchell's been half wild. He's a solid friend of mine, and when the case went over for another term he came and begged me to work up evidence for the old gentleman. I think I've got it, all right, and I know I can clear him in the end, but it's an intricate case, and may be appealed. All day long I've been simply struggling with Mary Lennox, trying to make her see her folly. I finally wrenched from her a promise to marry Mitchell in November, no matter how the case was decided. There-I mustn't talk to you like this. Try to sleep, little

Dorothy closed her eyes, but not to sleep. She closed them on scattered memories of the day — fragments of scenes and speeches. So much was missing. Some day it would all be made clear. In the silence a tender peace stole over her. The room filled slowly with pale light. The hand caressed Dorothy's gently. She opened her eyes. "Dorothy! Look at me, little one."

"Dorothy! Look at me, little one." Slowly Dorothy turned her head. She lifted her eyes to the face bending over her own. The great light she saw there

illumined life.

"Oh!" she breathed. "It's—you!"
"And y—beloved," whispered Clayton, brokenly.



A SOUTHERN GARDEN

THERE is a garden of the South, That lies along the sea, Kissed ever by the Summer's mouth And sweet with melody.

Around it runs a fragrant zone
Of rose and jasmine blent,
From whose bloom-builded bowers are blown
Breaths of the Orient.

The wonder-songs of mocking-birds.

Made for the day's delight,

Are still remembered in the words

Lisped by the breeze at night.

Sweetheart, if you were here to grace
This garden with your eyes,
Eden were this enchanted place,
Just next to Paradise.

F. D. SHERMAN.





MILE or more from the Kedley Country Club Ambledon's mare cast a shoe. Ambledon, who would have walked to the club on his hands rather than suffer Ladybell

a moment's pain, dismounted and led her to the top of the hill. Then he lifted the echoes in an appeal to a great grinning god of the plow, whistling in a neighboring field. The god pointed with this thumb.

"Blacksmith-shop over t' Quarry Farm," he said. "Nelson's man'll fix

you over thar."

Quarry Farm, quarter of a mile on, was a stretch of grass fields and sheep pasture, beyond which lay the stone quarry. A great, airy farmhouse stood white among the trees, its doors and windows open to the spring sun. The place gave cheery signs that the pleasant business of a country morning was toward, and from one of the straggling outbuildings, where some horse from one of the quarry teams was perpetually being reshod, came the clang of a blacksmith's hammer. Ambledon led Ladybell to the smithy door, tied her, and lounged away, waiting for a big, fractious sorrel to come out of the shop.

Apple-trees, in their full cloak of bloom, stood about the very dooryard, as if they had left the orchard and slipped up the hill in sheer impatience of spring. The kitchen garden seemed to exist for the sake of the flowers and peeping parsley, and the creeper over the back porch was pink with buds. Indoors some one was singing; the wind touched Ambledon's face pleasantly, and he strolled past the

house, idly eager for any sweet surprises that might await him. The bend of the walk brought him upon a veranda, where were seated six elderly women, five of whom were sewing, while the other read aloud.

"Gad!" thought Ambledon. "Summer boarders!" and fled back to the

kitchen garden.

The lift of song was still rising and falling with pretty insistence, and it came, Ambledon decided, from a rambling one-story shack near the kitchen itself. That, he thought, must be the dairy, and the mere memory of the word was an allurement. He quickened his steps, and appeared at the open window.

She was standing with her back toward him, in a little gown of pink print. Her hair was in two braids, and curled bewitchingly at the ends. A big, white apron went over her shoulders in rebellious ruffles, and she was singing and skimming cream from a row of bright

pans.

Ambledon was almost afraid to speak lest, when she turned, the pretty promise of the present picture should not be fulfilled. But, being a brave man, he risked it, and spoke.

"I beg your pardon," he said; "may

I have a glass of milk?"

The song stopped, but she did not turn. Instead, she answered with delightful, if impersonal, graciousness.

"Yes," she said; "and you may have part cream, But it won't be in a glass." She filled a shining cup with, charm-

ing deliberation.

"It'll be in what Nancy calls a 'ting cup,'" she said, and turned toward him.

Ambledon had hardly the presence of mind to receive the cup. The little

dairymaid looked so absurdly like a picture of an impossibly pretty dairymaid, that she seemed unreal. As for her, she blushed distractingly.

"I thought you were Mr. Masters," she said in a tone which plainly rebuked him for not being that gentleman.

"But may I have Mr. Masters' cream?" asked Ambledon promptly.

"You'll have to ask Mr. Masters," said the little maid demurely, and set the cup on the sill.

"If he asks for it," said Ambledon coolly, "please tell him that a thirsty man believed in his good nature."

He set down the empty cup. She smiled a little, but said nothing, and went on with the skimming.

Ambledon lingered shamelessly.
"Can you tell me," he asked, "whether there is any such thing as a dairyman? I don't mean a man who owns a dairy full of glass bottles, but a man who messes about in cream."

She looked at him in faint indignation that was a little scornful.

"I mean," he explained patiently, "this: I'm looking for a fancy-dress costume, and it must be rural, do you see? It's for a hunt ball next week. And it occurred to me just now that a Swiss dairyman, if they have 'em, ought to be rigged up pretty well—laced buskins and plaid sleeves and that kind of thing," he explained feebly.

She shook her head.

"I don't know," she said politely but

discouragingly.

"I suppose," said Ambledon absently, "that one might dress as a Swiss cheese."

She stood considering, balancing the skimmer daintily, without looking at him.

"Why don't you dress as a summer boarder?" she asked finally.

"By Jove!" cried Ambledon. "Magnificent! A summer boarder in his own idea of a country get-up. Nothing could be more rural. Won't you give me some suggestions?"

He leaned on the sill, his face boyishly eager. Ambledon was delightfully eager, in spite of the dust of gray at his temples. The little dairymaid looked at him and laughed suddenly—a merry, irrepressible little laugh. Ambledon remembered the laugh afterward as a part of the merry, irresponsible

morning. She could give surprisingly good suggestions, Ambledon found. She had ideas, he assured himself in pleased surprise. Moreover, as he listened, it was borne in upon him that she was rather a wonderful little creature. She had grace, and even manner, and her hands were small and well-shaped. But she spoke shyly, and she presently began to say "sir," as if she had just re-membered that she ought. He was delighted to find that "the neighbors" had actually had cotillions of their own. and she knew a certain Melon Vine figure which she explained to Ambledon with pretty spirit. "This way," she said once as she described it; and danced the width of the dairy. And when a servant entered and called her "Miss Nelson," Ambledon concluded suddenly that she must be the daughter of Farmer Nelson himself, who could have bought the entire Kedley Club,

stables and all, had he been so minded. Ambledon spent a brief, delicious half-hour over that window-ledge, with the sun falling in squares on the cool floor, and an occasional bee droning through the dairy in pursuit of fragrant wind. Sometimes the little maid skimmed, and sometimes she rested, and often her face lighted bewilderingly as she planned gaily for this hunt ball in which she could have no part. But she referred to Mr. Masters with disturbing frequency. Ambledon wondered who this Masters might be, and why the deuce he needed to be consid-

He was wondering still as he mounted the restored Ladybell and rode down the drive, idly threatening with his crop a flock of distracted geese. He passed the veranda, and noted that the six elderly women, had been joined by a lean, stooping youth, who languidly fanned himself with a hat that looked like a door-mat. At the gate Ambledon turned in his saddle, and he could have sworn that he caught a glimpse of disappearing pink in the window of the

Then Ambledon fled up the road and thought of to-morrow. She drove the cows to pasture at half-after five, and he had found out to which field!

At the club the arrangement committee of the hunt ball were awaiting him on the veranda. They were all staying at the club.

"Nice and late you are," growled Dickey Sturgis, watch in hand. ought to have caught the ten-five."

"We've fixed you, though, boy," nodded Hawley pleasantly. "You lead the fourth figure of the cotillion-and the lady is selected."

"Who?" demanded Ambledon, as he

came up the steps.

Bobbie Davis smiled like an angel. "The poor relation," he said trium-

Ambledon looked a little dazed and

very interrogative.

"The Dexters' cousin," explained Hawley. "She'll be here for the ball, Harriet Dexter says. Harriet says that the lady has, she believes, never danced a cotillion."

"Gad!" said Ambledon indignantly. "What's the matter with you, confound you? Am I chairman of this

committee, or am I not?"

"You're nice and late," explained Dickey Sturgis; "that's what you are. Now hear Hawley about the favors."

Tennis finals were to be played that afternoon, and Harriet Dexter and her sister came out. They bore down upon Ambledon in gratitude, which is seldom a woman's choicest grace. They had seen Dickey Sturgis in town.

"We've heard," said Miss Harriet playfully. "You nice man! We do want Mouse to have a good time, but we want to warn all our dearest and best that she's frightfully shy; and

you've got to help us.'

"Poor Mouse!" said Miss Bessie tolerantly. "Mr. Davis has met her, but she will know no one else at the ball. And you and Mr. Davis and Dickey must be angels to her."

"It's a privilege to be an angel," pro-

tested Ambledon politely. None the less, the prospect of the hunt ball, and of the fourth figure in particular, lost color. He had spent some time and thought on that figure, and he was incensed at Dickey Sturgis and the rest, and privately called them a company of meddling idiots. And then his thoughts flew regretfully back to the cool dairy and the little pink skirts that had touched and lifted across the stone floor in the intricacies of the Melon Vine figure, and suddenly Ambledon had a plan-a plan daring and delicious, and occasioning him pleasant amazement that his somewhat unromantic life had flowered in so sweet and unforeseen a possibility. Ambledon stayed at the club that night, and excited the amused wonder of Dickey Sturgis and Bobbie Davis by smiling mysteriously at nothing at all all evening, and the respectful derision of the house boy by demanding to be called at five o'clock.

Half-after five next morning saw him taking the south meadow at a tangent, and when he heard the far tinkle of a cow-bell he sat on a stile, and made a whip of a branch of wild roses, and

waited.

"Good morning," he said to her, as she came between the wild-rose hedges.

She looked out from under her broad-brimmed hat without surprise.

"Summer boarders," she said, "are never out so early-sir."

"Spring boarders are," he said, walking beside her; "and a spring boarder would be saying, 'Where are you going, my pretty maid?' May I say it?"

"Don't-sir," she begged. make me feel like a picture on a cal-

"You ought to feel like a picture," declared Ambledon; "besides, I have a

much better thing to say."

For, at sight of her in her fresh gown, with its open throat and turnedback sleeves, and of her beautiful, glowing face, Ambledon's resolution was taken afresh, and his plan forthwith projected. Even if that fourth figure were to be danced with the Dexters' poor relation, the evening might

yet hold for him allurement,

He laid the matter before her delicately and formally, as a spring boarder should. He was not, he confessed, known to either Mr. or Mrs. Nelson, but several of the men at the Kedlev Club were, because they had ridden over the Nelson fields for a year or two. It was a fancy-dress ball, and very informal. If he were properly introduced, didn't she think-wouldn't she consider-he knew that what he was asking was impossible-but would she go to the hunt ball and wear her dairy frock? Ambledon was radiant at the prospect of appearing there with her, to the mystification of Dickey Sturgis and Bobby and the rest.

The little maid blushed and courte-

sied deliciously.

"Dear me, sir," she said; "with all the grand folk?"

Ambledon winced.

"They're not grand," he said, a bit sharply. "They're pretty stupid, some of them. But you would have a good time, I think. Please say you will. It is very informal."

"If I went—sir," she said, with averted face, "I would rather wear my best dress—the delaine with a sprig in

"No, no," said Ambledon hurriedly: "wear just what you are wearing now. It's fancy dress, you know. Promise me. You will go, won't you?" "Dear me, sir," said the little maid;

"yes, sir, I'll go, sir."

The "sirs" vaguely disturbed Ambledon. He did not recall that she had used them so violently the day before. But if only she acted like this, he thought, there would be no more charmingly ingénue little dairymaid at the ball.

He let down the bars for her, and the cows passed through to a banquet of buttercups. Then he looked about at the young, closely nibbled clover on the firm turf, and he swept her a courtly bow.

"Mademoiselle," he said, "will you honor me? Since we are to lead the Melon Vine figure together next week. we must have a rehearsal."

The sun slanted madly across the meadow, the morning was sweet with spring flowers and musical with birds; and for the little maid and Ambledon the world was young. They went through the pretty figure, she instructdeliciously - bowing, stepping daintily, and giving him her hand in the many turns. Once he was to kneel to her, and he bent on one knee in the dewy grass while she tempted him with an imaginary melon which was the favor for the figure, and he thought that he had never seen so beautiful a face as hers as she bent above him in her youth and child's delight at the pretty play. And when it was all over he gave her, for favor, a great bunch of dewy harebells, and led her to the stile to rest.

Just for a moment she sat there, breathing quickly for the dancing, then she sprang up in dismay as she looked

at the high sun.

"Mr. Masters will be wanting his breakfast," she said, and piled the harebells in her hat and was off, nodding him a gay good-by.

"But don't call-at our house, sir," she bade him shyly. "I can do as I please, you know; and I will go to the

hunt ball, anyway!"

Ambledon watched her run lightly across the meadow. She had forbidden him to go with her, and now she had forbidden him the house. And yet, Ambledon thought, this was not mere unconvention and ignorance of the ways of the world. It was rather the informality of a fairy!

At nine o'clock on the night of the hunt ball Ambledon drove down the fragrant road to Quarry Farm in his

own trap.

"This is a truly rural ball, and I have a truly rural guest," he told himself; "so I'll go for her with a horse and buggy, as a summer boarder should."

He was in flannels, with an absurd "shirt of purple mail," as Dickey said, and a broad, shapeless hat, which no farmer would ever wear and no summer boarder should be without. He had brought no groom, and he intended to tie the horse and march boldly up to the veranda. But, to his surprise, a little figure came out from the azaleas by the gate of Quarry Farm. Little dairymaid was waiting for him!

Ambledon drove slowly through the star-lit dark. Some way, the moments were very sweet to him, and he was loath to have them end. He whipped the little leaves from the bending branches overhead, and threw his ridiculous hat down in the box of the trap, and found himself half wishing that it were true—that he was dressed so in good faith, driving to some country ball with this little creature beside him.

She was very silent. Ambledon fancied that he understood her shrinking from what she had undertaken.

"Dear little thing!" he thought compassionately. "It will be an ordeal."

"You mustn't mind," he said, "meeting so many strange folk. You won't?"
"Not—not much—sir," she said.

"Everybody will be in for fun," he said; "and we will have it. You must be just as you have been with me. Will you?"

"I'll try—sir," she said. "I won't be afraid if I'm with you—sir."

Ambledon's heart was beating as he helped her to alight. There was something suddenly and inexplicably sweet in her confidence in him.

In the crush at the dressing-room door, Ambledon saw with satisfaction, as she rejoined him, that her dairy-frock was quite perfect, and that her beauty was dazzling. She laid her hand upon his arm, and Ambledon knew that the whole Kedley Club and all its balls had never meant to him what this meant. Then they entered the ball-room.

"Elizabeth!" cried Miss Harriet and Miss Bessie Dexter in one breath. "Mama was furious that we did not insist upon calling for you."

Dickey Sturgis turned, screwing in his monocle, and suddenly Bobby Davis was before them, bowing profoundly at the little maid. From the edge of the crowd Mrs. Dexter was making her way toward them, and in their midst stood the little dairymaid, smiling and bowing and giving her hand.

"You dear!" said Miss Harriet Dexter. "You dear, naughty thing! And whatever did Mr. Ambledon think of your vagary?"

What Ambledon did think was not apparent. And the fact that he did not know what to think was, all things considered, very well concealed.

"Will you forgive me—sir?" she asked shyly, when they found a moment to themselves. "You see, the Nelsons are our cousins, and I'm a summer boarder there."

"It doesn't make much difference to me," said Ambledon deliberately, "who you are, You are here, and that is enough."

"That began very brutally," she said, with pretty petulance. "You were not rude to me when I was a dairymaid."

Ambledon meditated.

"Did you think me an awful idiot?" he asked gloomily; and then remembered something, and was struck with more gloom. "Who," he wanted to know, "is Mr. Masters?"

"Ah, he is the summer boarder whom you are dressed like," she told him; and Ambledon remembered the lean, flanneled figure on the Quarry Farm veranda, fanning himself with a door-mat hat. "He has been very useful to—us," said the little maid adorably.

When he led her out for the fourth figure, and she courtesied to him, her pink skirts held in thumb and fore-finger, all the joy of that meadow morning was in Ambledon's eyes—and something besides.

"This isn't the meadow," he said regretfully, as their hands met. "Do we like it as well?"

Miss Elizabeth Nelson looked down.
"Ah," she said, "I shall not mind this, since I am with you—sir."



THE GIRL FROM KILPATRICK'S By B.M.Bower





PEAKING uh the Rocking-R outfit makes me think uh the deal that caused them to bid me a fond farewell—in other words, the time they canned me. It wasn't a square

deal, the way I sized it up; I was looking for a laurel wreath to set on my brow—and maybe a steady job as Family Hero, with nothing to do but look pretty and draw wages—and all I got out of it was my time and a lot uh disparaging remarks from the old man. If yuh want a man to admire your noble courage a lot, see to it that yuh don't hit his pocket; just so sure as yuh cause him to lose a dollar by your heroism, he'll turn yuh down and call yuh hard names—all of which I learned at the Rocking-R.

The way the play come up, I was

breaking colts at the home ranch, for fifty a month-and I earned every blamed sou, now I'm telling yuh! Betweenwhiles, I was a kind uh unofficial courier for the whole push; and that was worth another fifty a month-only, I didn't get it. The old man was the sort that'll start yuh out on an errand to-day, and feel hurt if yuh don't get back bright and early yesterday morning. He didn't give a damn how yuh went about it-it was the miracle he was after, every time. He'd sav: "Here, Bill, saddle up and take this note to So-and-so, and bring me an answer before sundown," or something like that. And it didn't make any difference whether So-and-so was ten mile off or a hundred. Little Willie'd have to drift

-and I will say that most generally

Little Willie made good.

My top horse, that summer, was sure all right-when vuh once got on; but that same getting on wasn't any Labor Day picnic, either. Nobody but me could do any business with him at all. and even me, his loved master, used to dance on one foot for upward of an hour, with my other toe in the stirrup, before there was anything doing. Then he'd eat up all the precious minutes he'd wasted, in the first five miles, and I'd forgive him till next time I had to get on. It sure paid to do the lamechicken act with him-but. Lord! he was hard on the nerves; especially the old man's, when he was burning with desire to see me start. The boys used to call me and Ring the Human Telegraph; but Ring wasn't human-not quite. I named him Ring-Around-a-Rosy, but life was too short to use that cognomen common, so I called him just Ring, unless maybe on Sunday, when I had time to burn.

I guess I'm a lot like Ring; it takes a lot uh prelude to get me headed anywhere; but I can go some, once I start. So here's the how:

The old man started me off one day—it was in the middle uh the shipping season—with a message for Blank Davis, the round-up boss. I was to get to camp by dark, change horses, and back to the ranch by daylight; the old man was in a sweat, and the "telegraph" had to get busy quick. It was some hurry-up order about a shipment uh beef. The old man was grasping as a devil-fish, and it was "frenzied finance," and then some, in shipping time.

So, those being my orders, and the old man being more pecky about it than usual, I saddled Ring and done the toe-

dance, same as always. It was no good tying up a foot—that made him plumb ugly. The old man danced around and swore, and I danced around and done the same. Finally I got on, and the way we faded from view up the coulée must uh done the old man good to see. I had ninety miles to get over, but I could be the plant of the same of t

bank on Ring every time.

The way I was headed took me straight away from Willow Creek and over toward Sand Piper, but bearing more to the east, so as to strike the round-up somewhere along on Big Birch. You know what a dense population that country hasn't got. There ain't a ranch in twenty mile; nothing but the hills and coulées and benches, all wearing a large, loose garment uh pure lonesomeness.

So I was burning the earth, along about half-way across the flat between Square Butte and Hell Coulée—and that's sure as lonesome a land as ever I want to ride over—when I seen something white fluttering from what I took to be a sheep-herder's monument on the little pinnacle at the head of Hell Coulée; only there hadn't ever been a monument there before. I headed for the flag uh truce, though it was quite a bit out uh my way, and the old man hadn't give me none too much time to make the trip in, and it was getting along past the middle uh the afternoon then.

But out where nature hasn't ever been manhandled, it don't do to overlook any bets; in those places "All men are brothers" is a good rule to go by. It rode along, and pretty soon I seen it was some human waving me a comeon—and a little closer, I knew it for a

woman.

Now, a woman is most generally a welcome sight to a man out on the range, where they ain't too thick to be a novelty; but that's once when I wasn't glad to have one cross my trail; woman means time wasted, always—and I hadn't none to throw away. I was plumb ignorant uh how she come there, or what was wrong, but I was willing to learn. She come running down to meet me—where it wasn't too

steep; other places she was slipping and sliding down in the thick grass. You know how slippery dead grass can

ret.

When she got down where I was, I took a good look at her while I was lifting my hat. A fellow that's used to reading brands on sight, and all that, don't have to drop his jaw and gawp all day to size up anything. I couldn't place her, and I didn't know where was her home range, but I can say right here that she sure looked good to Little Willie! She was slim and light on her feet-I knowed her right there for a swell dancer, just the way she carried herself-and she had red hair-the dark, shiny kind that vuh like to watch the sun shine on, just to see it turn to gold. And her eyes put a crimp in me, right there.

They said things, those eyes did. They asked me to please be good, because she was in hard luck out there alone; and where did I come from, and what might my name be? And at the same time they was sassing me for being a strange man and on the earth at all, and for wanting to know things; and they double-dared me to think wrong, or to make a crooked move. I tell yuh right now, Little Willie's hands went up in the air, and he gentled right down till a lady could drive him—which

she sure did.

She stopped twenty feet off, for all the world like a meadow-lark that would like to make friends and dassent. And I said: "Good afternoon," just as if I'd met her in her dad's front door—wherever that might be.

That seemed to make her feel that we was on speaking terms, anyway, for she said: "Did you see anything of a

loose saddle-horse?"

I said I hadn't, and had she lost one? She told me she had—just as if it was a handkerchief, or as if she didn't realize that a saddle-horse is trumps in a place like that. I've always thought that God made that country the last thing, and was kind uh sick uh the job and slapped it together in a hurry, and never went back to smooth it down any.

So then she told me that she was Glen Kilpatrick, and was riding across to McHardie's place on Willow Creek. It's a good forty miles—some folks say it's only thirty-five, but they lie, and the truth ain't in 'em—and she wasn't lost, because she'd often made the trip alone. But back there in Hell Coulée she'd got off to get a drink, out uh the spring there, and her horse pulled out and left her afoot. She'd put a rock on the bridle-reins, she said, but she jumped up a jack-rabbit and scared

him, so he broke loose.

I said he'd probably head for home, and they'd be out looking for her; but it's a blamed discouraging place to find any one in, and that's no dream. I didn't tell her that, but she didn't need any telling. She was wiser than me to the situation. She said the horse was a new one that her father had just bought of Frank Potter, so he'd take a straight shoot to Frank's place, which was down below the Rocking-R quite a piece. I hadn't run onto him—and you can see the prospect didn't cheer

Glen Kilpatrick or me.

I set there and studied so hard my head ached, but I couldn't see but one thing to do. I couldn't take her up on Ring, nor she couldn't ride him alone —that was a cinch. She couldn't even get within ten feet of him but he'd back and snort, that impolite I was plumb ashamed of him. The walking wasn't all took up, as they say-there was miles of it in any direction you wanted, all up-hill and down coulée. I figured that the closest place was her home-I knew where it was, but I'd never been right to the place—and that was a good long fifteen miles. I looked at her feet and shook my head, without mentioning what I was thinking about; but she savvied, I guess, for her face got all There was no use taking after her horse-she said he'd been gone a couple uh hours. So I rolled me a cigarette and delivered my ultimatum.

I told her there was just the one thing for me to do, and that was ride to her dad's and get another horse and bring it to her. She didn't look none hilarious, but she said it seemed the only way—if it wouldn't be too much trouble! There's one fundamental principle in life that none uh these New Thoughters or science sharps are ever going to argue away, and that is, that nothing's too much trouble for a man when he's doing it for a woman—well, the woman. I'll bet Glen Kilpatrick was next to that great truth, too, the way her eyes laughed when she said it.

Then I looked at the place where I guessed the sun was, done some mental arithmetic with a page uh geography for the key, and did another thinking stunt. It would be plumb dark before I could get back, even if I put Ring through all there was in him; and how was I going to find her again? If vuh know that country, and how rough it is, with a dozen hills that look just alike, you'll savvy that I couldn't find her; not in the dark-and it was going to be black as down a well at midnight. The air was heavy with smoke from prairie fires, so the sun couldn't drill a hole through, even. And as for the moon-well, there wouldn't be any till near morning, anyhow.

I looked around for fuel, but there wasn't anything there, uh course. She said there was plenty uh currant bushes and the like down in the coulée behind the pinnacle. So I got off my horse and led him up to the top and anchored him good—he'd stand with the reins dropped, all right, but I wasn't taking any chances just then—and we went down after some wood, so when it got about time for me to get back, she could start a little fire on the pin-

nacle.

She was sure plucky, that little girl, and never made a whine about camping there alone for three or four hours. I know lots uh women that would a cried at the mere mention uh such a thing.

Well, we packed up two loads apiece, and it was slow work. The hill was so steep we couldn't carry much at a time, and it was a heartbreaking climb, anyhow. I broke it up so she could feed a little at a time, and keep it going, if I was longer than we thought.

I gave up the last match I had—there wasn't but four—and commenced to

play Ring-around-a-rosy with that fool horse; and if ever I wanted to cuss and couldn't, it was right then. We'd spent quite a lot uh time getting the wood, and it was getting pretty late. I didn't want to leave that gritty little girl alone out there in the dark any longer than I had to—but Ring had to have his little fun with me, whether I

had time to play or not.

When I did get on, I throwed the hooks into him pretty savage, and hollered: "See yuh later!" to Glen. And my Adam's apple come up and like to choked me, so I had to swallow twice on it—the way she stood there by that little heap uh wood and watched me go, and tried to look as if she didn't mind being left; but I wouldn't be afraid to bet she cried some, out there on that pinnacle, when she couldn't see me no morè. I don't mean that I'm so many, but 'most anybody would look good to her, out there.

I took my bearings by the hills, and hit her up pretty lively the first six miles or so. Lord! that's a rough bit uh land—about forty little draws and coulées to the mile, and some of them you can cross, and some you have to go around, unless yuh get off and lead your horse. I wasn't for getting off uh Ring—not on your life! I rode around

the worst places.

I'd got six or seven miles, maybe, and was riding up the highest ridge of all—that one between Dry Fork and Sweet Grass Coulée—and it was getting dark already; but there was red in the sky, and a mighty rank odor uh burning grass. It was right in the prairie-fire season, and the grass was heavy and

fires common.

I got to the top, and glanced back over my shoulder—and, say! I could feel my hair stand on end, under my hat. Straight across behind me stretched a line uh flame, from Willow Creek clear across to Sand Piper, and it was galloping up before a stiff southwest wind. Hell Coulée lay about in the middle of its path—and it wasn't going to do no turning out to go around, either! And that little girl back there on that pinnacle—

I'll bet old Ring turned on a space you could cover with a dishpan-and back I put for Hell Coulée. Ring had his work cut out for him to reach her ahead uh that fire, and I was the boy that knew it, all right. I laid flat as I could, and sent him ahead all there was in him, now I'm telling yuh. You needn't ever tell me a horse hasn't got as much brains as a man; Ring knowed just as well as I did what was wrong. The brute in him told him to head the other way, and not to loiter, but the human in him told him about that little girl back there, and the human was a heap the strongest. He laid along the ground like a yellow streak, and went straight across places we'd dodged going out.

I'd a said prayers, I guess, if me and Ring hadn't been so pressed for time. I watched that red glow in the sky, now, I tell you! After I got down off that ridge I couldn't see the fire no more—and that made it forty times worse. I couldn't tell how the game was going, and—— Say, a man cane surfer a heap in a mighty short time; I found that out right then.

I guess we made a record run that time, all right; I know Ring never done anything like it before or since. After about a hundred and fifty years—according to the way I felt—we sighted the pinnacle. It wasn't dark then! The whole country looked like a tableau when the red fire is burning, and big flakes of burnt grass fell on us like a snow-storm done in black.

I seen her standing on the highest point, and I yelled, but I don't know if she heard me; the roar was like a fast train going over a bridge by that time. Anyway, we got there first—and it was blame lucky we didn't have any farther to go, for Ring was about all in. He fair whistled going up that last hill.

I slid off beside her, and grinned— I was so tickled to be there. And she just put her arms around me for a second and never said a damn word; she's

got grit, that girl has!

I hollered for the matches, to set a back-fire; but she'd used up the last one trying it. The wind blew so hard, she

said, they went out fast as she could light them; well, she'd done the best she could—she wasn't no cigarette fiend, and hadn't learned to keep matches going in an eighty-mile breeze. So that settled the back-fire scheme, all right; and the fire was galloping up the hill that fast we could feel it, and we looked like we was under a stage lime-light—till the smoke rolled up onto us.

I didn't have no time to study what was best—I went to work. I tied Ring's bridle-reins up and turned him loose, and he hiked. Then I grabbed the girl by an arm and put for Hell

Coulée in a long lope.

The smoke come mighty near putting us both out un business, and this story'd a ended right there if it had. But we staved with it and kept agoing, just 'cause we neither of us was particularly anxious to go out by the fire route. I'd noticed a sluff-off down a piece from where we'd got the wood, where there was a kind of ledge part way down the coulée side, and around it just yellow clay and gravel. I made for that spot. I'll never tell yuh how we got to it and onto that ledge, but we did. know, 'gause when I kinda come to myself and got the smoke out uh my lungs, we was both there. I've thought since that the Lord is mighty thoughtful; He must a kept that place ready for us a good many years, so it would be there when we needed it worse than we'd ever needed anything before in our lives. I asked Glen about it afterward, and she sure agreed with me.

That fire struck Hell Coulée like a cyclone, and licked its chops around that sluff-off, and like to broiled us with the heat; it would, I guess, only it didn't last long. But while it did Hell Coulée sure lived right up to its name

and then some.

When it had passed—and, say! it made me think uh that piece uh poetry about "The hurricane had swept the glen." I can't remember the rest. We just sat there and got our lungs full dh clean air once more, and rested; and we didn't say anything much. I guess we both felt kinda shaky to think what it was we'd gone up against. I know I

did; and I was having a little prayermeeting inside, over that ledge, and one

thing and another.

After awhile the stars come out, and it wasn't quite so much like being several thousand feet down a coal mine, with no lamp. Then Glen said it didn't seem to do any good to set there like Micawber, waiting for something to turn up; and if I was willing to tackle a little stroll of about fifteen miles, she was. I never knew Micawber—but I liked her grit, and I told her if she thought she was good for fifteen miles, we'd strike out.

So we did. Anyhow, she said, we needn't be afraid of another prairie fire. You've been over burnt land, I guess; did yuh ever walk across the prairie about forty minutes behind a fire? If yuh have, yuh know the kind uh deal we had. The ground didn't feel hot when we started; after a little, the warm began to get through our shoes. And that rank, burnt-grass smell got plumb monotonous, and so did the black ashes flying up in our faces at nearly every step.

Before we'd got across the coulée I was sorry we started, for I con'd see it was going to be an even chance if she made it; and high-heeled boots ain't what I'd recommend for a walking-match. I took my spurs off and hung them over my arm, and helped her along all I could—or all she'd let me. She started off mighty brave and independent, and wanted to walk fast, so as to get home before the supper got

cold, it looked like.

But when a man has put in 'steen years on the range, and has gone up against every kind of scaly layout, and has nursed cattle through long, dry drives, he learns some things. I don't for a minute mean that Glen Kilpatrick was like cattle, but, all the same, I applied the same rules as far as I could. I made her take her time; and when we came to a hill, or a nice pile uh rocks, I'd make her set down and rest. And when we came to water, she had to take a drink and bathe her face, and I done the same; for those ashes were a hard proposition, now, I tell you.

Fifteen miles don't sound like such a terrible ways--and it ain't, when you're on a horse. But you start out and walk There is an old saying-you've heard it—"From hell to Kilpatrick's." I never gave it much thought-but if it means Hell Coulée, I can tell yuh right now it's a mighty long jaunt. And you want to recollect that the fifteen miles meant straight across-an air-line. It didn't count in all the hills we went down, nor the ones we climbed, to get across coulées. If we'd a had one uh those clock businesses attached to us. I'll bet it would a registered a good fifty miles-and that's no josh.

About half-way we came to a little ereek. Glen was about all in, only she wouldn't own up. I made her set down and take off her shoes and bathe her feet good. She kicked on doing it—but I went off a little piece and turned my back; and, anyway, it was pretty

dark.

We stayed there quite awhile and rested, and talked a little. We got pretty well acquainted on that trip. And I found out that she was The Woman, and always would be; but I didn't tell her so—not in so many words. I ain't quite a fool, I hope. But I do admire nerve, in man or woman; I never yet saw a coward that was much force, anyhow. You can't depend on them. And when yuh find a woman like Glen—well! I was singing "Just One Girl"—down deep inside uh me—before we left the ledge, even.

Then we went on, and history repeated itself till we was both plumb sick of it. It was walk, walk, walk; scramble and slide and fall down a hill; feel your way across a black coulée bottom, and watch out yuh don't tumble head-first into a washout—I went ahead, places like that, with one hand behind me holding to Glen—climb up out uh that coulée; walk, walk, walk—and so on, ad infinitum—if yuh know what that means. I don't, but it sounds like cuss words in a foreign tongue, so I guess it applies.

By and by the moon peeked up over a mountain, like it wondered what the dickens was up, anyhow. And the land

was dead still-no grass for the wind to whisper things to, and no living thing left to cheep at us and scurry away. Nothing but black, burnt prairie, till vuh felt like vuh was walking through the earth the next day after resurrection, when the world had been rolled together and burnt. It got pretty chilly, too, along toward morning. wanted Glen to take my coat and put it on, but she got mad at me mentioning it, so I had to work a scheme on her. I went along like I'd given up the idea -but I hadn't: not when I could feel her shiver every once in awhile. So pretty soon I unbuttoned my coat and throwed it open, and said that walking was warm work as wrassling calves. She eyed me suspicious, but I never let on. Then, after awhile, I got hotter, and took my coat off-but I didn't offer it to her; I just slung it over my arm and walked on unconcerned.

After a mile or so I got tired uh carrying it, and said I guessed I'd leave it on the next big rock, and come after it in the morning, and then she walked into the trap and said if I was going to leave it, she might as well put it on, for she did feel a little chilly! She was pretty sharp—but I hadn't tamed bronks all these years for nothing!

The sun come up and found us still a-walking. We was closer to Kilpatrick's than we was to Hell Coulée, and that was about all I could see we had gained. But we kept pegging away, only we rested oftener, and Glen never objected. She looked like a tired little nigger, and I had to put my arm around her and help her along—which wasn't such a cross, either; only I did hate to see her so played out.

Then she got to the limit, where she couldn't go no farther, and didn't seem to care much whether she ever got home or not. It ain't only freezing and seasickness that puts yuh into that frame uh mind; you can just get so tired you lay 'em down and don't give

a cuss.

So I had to carry her that last mile or so. I took her on my back—which wasn't graceful, nor picturesque, maybe, but it was practical. Yuh can't carry a woman very far in your arms, the way they do on the stage; it looks better, but you wouldn't get far.

When we did get down into Kilpatrick's coulée, Glen roused up and walked the last few hundred yards, and we went up to the door and I knocked. Old Kilpatrick come to the door, and, so help me, he didn't know Glen from a hole in the ground, she was that black and draggled, and with my coat on. She had to call him by name, and he looked kind uh dazed even then—and I can't say I blamed him any. But I would 'a' felt plumb jealous at the way he gathered her into his arms, if he hadn't been her dad.

We had something to eat, and then Little Willie slept the clock around twice, more or less. Then I felt more normal—except in the region uh my heart—and I borrowed a horse from Kilpatrick and went and delivered that message to Blank Davis—only they'd moved twice, away from Big Birch, and I had a dickens of a time finding camp, and rode about a hundred and twenty-

five miles.

I delivered it, all right—trust Little Willie for that !- and hiked back to the Rocking-R only about two days overdue. And that's where I got turned down. Ring had gone back-how he dodged the fire's a plumb mystery to me, but I told vuh Ring was half human-and the old man wanted explanations and then some. I told him all about how the play come up, and waited for the congratulations. If anybody should ask yuh, I'm still a-waiting! It was just my luck that he hates old Kilpatrick worse than snakes, and by my courage and chivalry-he had some different names for it, which I won't repeat in public-I'd caused him to lose a rise in the market, or some darned thing. He was dollars to the bad, anyway, and so Little Willie had to drift.

But I ain't worrying none. I went straight back over to Kilpatrick's and went to work for him, and he's a grateful old party. He's going to let me marry Glen—which shows how sensible he is, because I'd marry her, anyway,

whether he let me or not.



THE PORTION

PIVE kisses hath my dear Love given me; Like blessèd beads I say them o'er and o'er. Slow, sad and perfect, as such kisses be, And mine for evermore.

Five kisses that I count as five sweet years:

One when we met as laughing friend to friend;
One when our sorrow shook us both with fears;
Three kisses at the end.

Too late I came into the banquet hall.

The feast was done; yet, on my bended knees,
I found the crumbs—five kisses—that is all.
I thank Thee, Lord, for these.

ANONYMOUS.





HATE not to win. I simply hate it. I suppose there is something in the blood, some queer kink in the curls of my brain. I do not know how science would explain

it. Anyway, I am sure that it is inheritance. I could not be the daughter of my daddy—not to say my mammy without knowing the feeling.

I have got too much of the same spirit which brought papa through the P. D. and Q. "corner" of '98. I possess too thoroughly the same determination which enabled him to carry out the Starch Consolidation of '02. I have seen him at the State convention when things were not going his way, and I have understood just how he felt. He had got to win out, or he and every one else would know the reason why.

As for mama—when Mrs. Philo Pettigrew Stoner wished to be president of the Twentieth Century, did she do it? Not any more than the day before yesterday is the day after to-morrow. When the need for the new wing for the hospital became unquestionable, did it get built? As surely as Fourth of July follows Christmas! With such parentage I could not be anything but what I was. With a thoroughly American father and mother, I had to be a thoroughly American girl, who simply could not bear not to take the ring in the birthday cake every time.

Honesty when meeting even becoming modesty in the road should have the right of way. Therefore, candor compels me to state that I have seldom failed. At Miss Parmale's school,

if I made up my mind I would pass an examination the first, I always did it. Equally, if I wished to go to a particular matinée, though an official edict might forbid, I went. When the time arrived for me to appear as a débutante, I had the biggest "coming-out party" which Lakeborough ever saw. At everything to which I went I "split" each dance more times than any other girl. I was the belle of the ball, the success of the winter; if not the only, then the most prominent, "bud" in the bunch. Into everything I did I carried the same spirit and purpose. I would not be beaten. I simply could not be. Consequently, when I got an automobile-

There is something I have observed about an automobile which powerfully affects the character of the possessor. He or she may not become another man or woman, but they certainly are often wonderfully changed. No clearer case of a person's rearing a Frankenstein exists. Such a one is never the same again. I do not refer to the faraway, set look that appears in the eyes, which to one who did not know might mean unutterable things, but which in reality springs from the habit of watching for dogs crossing the course. Neither do I allude to the bowed shoulder, bent as if with care—as is truly the case, though the condition solely arises from much leaning over the wheel. Nor do I mean the nervous action of the fingers, noticeable in a sleightof-hand man, a pickpocket and a lunatic, which is caused by the motorist's need of having his fingers in every pie at once and being obliged to act so quickly that he cannot allow his left

hand to know what his right hand doeth, I mean the alteration in the inner man or woman. I have in mind the revolution in character which follows. I wish to indicate the upheaval of nature which takes place. Something in the "chugchug" of the machine seems to act upon the calmest mind. The quietest heart appears to "catch the spark." Let the most retiring and unself-assertive person get an automobile, and at once he is unwilling to take anybody's "dust." Not only he will not be passed, but the desire springs up to pass every one else. The war-horse crying "ha-ha" is nothing to the automobilist seeking other bubbles to conquer.

With my disposition the acquisition of a new four-cylinder, twenty-eight horsepower Dangerfield Great Comet was a brand cast on the burning. The prevailing trait of my character was increased and accentuated and magnified and multiplied a hundredfold. The thing seemed sent to supply a longfelt want. In it I could run by anybody in the place, and I did not hesitate

to tear past the whole town.

"You'll come to grief," warned papa.
"The place is not on my road map,"

I answered confidently.

I was easily tooling up a slight hill on the State road, just a few miles beyond the country-club. Nothing particular was in my mind. In such maiden meditation fancy free I was giving my attention pretty equally to the question of the combustion and the consideration of a new young man who had appeared the night before. Of course I knew all about Tack Scranton. The Scrantons were as old and prominent in town as the Milsons, only Jack had been in Europe since he was a boy, with his mother, who was an invalid, and I had never seen him. I liked the way he looked at once, which, I suppose, is the reason I ran away from him. The dinner had been large, and I had contrived so that I had not met him. I was wondering about this-and regretting it a little-when I came over the brow of the hill and in sight of an automobile running along before me.

I did not recognize the car. The fact

that it was strange antagonized me at once. No dog seeing another approach his bone had a greater inclination to show his teeth. What was this alien doing in my territory? I wanted to bark. I should have liked to growl.

The dust was stifling, and I wished to escape it. A turn of the hand, and I was rushing down the gentle declivity after the intruder. The other auto hurried on likewise. Whoever was in it had clearly heard me coming, and did not propose to be passed. The road was broad and smooth and stretched straight away. It was an ideal place for a brush. Before I knew, I found myself engaged in a brisk trial of speed. Not since I had got my Great Comet had any one kept ahead of me, and I did not intend to have that happen now. I expected that in a moment I should be up with my unseen rival and beyond. I was a little surprised to discover that the distance between us had not perceptibly lessened. I pumped on gasoline and used the accelerator before had I been obliged to employ such heroic measures. At once, almost as if with new life, my car surged forward. By now we were going it! The grass at the wayside was an ever green The telegraph-poles shot by so quickly that if I had the inclination or time to count them I could hardly have done it. The race was on, and I had to win. I simply had to.

The wind sang in my ears. Little flies pelted me in the face. In my experience with my local rivals I had found no foeman worthy of my steel or wheels. My blood was up. Nothing should keep me from taking the lead. Heedless of everything except conquering, I kept on. I only lifted my eyes from the road to glance for a moment at the concealing brown top in front. To carry on a contest in this way with a hidden and unknown enemy added to the zest of the moment. In some fashion the mysteriousness seemed to increase the sense of adventure.

The pace was ripping. Then I began to gain, and nearly side by side we flew along. Still the edge of the hood kept the other chauffeur from view. Suddenly, without any apparent reason, I shot ahead. I was going at such a clip that I could not slow down without too much of a jerk until I had gone a considerable distance. To the rearward I caught the lugubrious tooting of a horn.

Immediately I brought the car to a standstill. I peered round and beheld my late adversary in the distance waving a handkerchief. He was coming along more deliberately; and I held on, waiting for him to catch up.

All at once I realized that he was

Tack Scranton,

"Are you in need of help?" I demanded, when he was within easyspeaking distance.

"No," he replied.

"Then what are you doing?" I de-

"Waving the white flag of defeat," he answered.

"I thought that you were signaling to me."

"Perhaps I was," he responded, as his automobile paused beside my Great Comet in the middle of the road. "I didn't know that it was you, Sallie-Miss Milson-until I could see you;

"You don't mean to say that you think I could not have beaten you?" I

cried indignantly.

then I slowed up."

"No, indeed. With this old rattletrap I was out of it," he answered earnestly. "I only stopped in time to avoid utter discomfiture. To the victor, which is you, belongs all the spoils."

"I don't see any," I responded primly. "Only I could not have you thinking that you could have won. That is a

thing I do not permit."

"Never?"

"Never," I declared firmly. "Don't you ever meet defeat?" "I could not let it happen."

"But suppose by some remarkable, unavoidable, unaccountable, miraculous

"I can't think of it."

"You'd have a great respect for anything or anybody who-

"I can't conceive of my state of mind. I've always been successful so far."

"Then it might be an excellent lesson for you," he remarked slowly.

"I don't believe the experience would be good for my character. At least, I don't want my character improved in that way. As to this conversation, however-doesn't it seem rather singular for strangers?"

"We are not strangers," he asserted cheerfully. "You simply don't remember. I've spun tops with you, and played marbles with you."

"I'm sure I won."

"I'm willing to say that you did. I assure you that we were children together. Why, the last time I saw you I rescued you as a white captive from fierce and ruthless savages. After that I think the least you can do is to speak to me."

"Were you the one who was always the leader of the scouts or else the In-

dian chief?"

"I was," he answered.

"Oh!"

Vague memories of almost forgotten childhood came in vivid flashes. I saw a boy a few years older than myself, who in my very youthful eyes appeared everything that was wonderful. There was nothing he dared not attempt, from hanging from a tree by his feet to jumping from a higher fence than any one else. There was nothing he could not do, from building a snow fort to defending it. He was always the master spirit in all, and I-I was his devoted, adoring slave.

"Are you dining at the Stimpsons'

to-night?" I asked abruptly.

"No."

"I thought perhaps you might be taking me in.'

"I was asked, but, you see, I've got

to go away."

"But you're coming back?" I did not keep a certain tone of anxiety out of my voice.

"Oh, yes; I'm here to stay; to become a permanent fixture—a feature of the landscape."

"Then," I said as I started up the ma-

chine, "I may see you again.'

Lakeburgh was not a place where too many things happened. Interesting strangers appeared but rarely. Exciting events were few and far between. There was small reason to expect a run on the bank of the emotions. Indeed, a girl might go on day after day and week after week saving up youthful dreams and dawning enthusiasms and not have a chance to

draw on them.

Suddenly I experienced an attack of the dumps. I felt acutely the vanity of human wishes. I resented the holowness of the world, particularly as it presented itself to a girl. I think that my pride and interest in my Great Comet were the only things which kept my spirit up. I read in a novel of a heroine who used to take out her steed and ride madly at sunset over the country. As a more modern example of the same sort, I had up the automobile every afternoon and sped through the country, leaving everything else behind me.

I seemed to demand the quick motion. The only way in which I could escape restlessness was to take it out in going as fast as I could. For some reason I began to harbor a strange resentment against Jack Scranton. Why had he gone away? Not that I said that I wanted him to come back. I found a ground for anger against him even in the fact that he was coming back. Why should I be thinking about him at all—whether he had gone or was going to return? In fact, I was thoroughly dissatisfied with everybody and with myself, which is just the last straw

on the back of endurance.

After about the tenth day of such disquietude I was becoming bored and listless. I had slipped away from every one, and far out in the country was mooning along. I felt almost as if I had given the auto its head and it was taking me whither it pleased. At least, I was not paying much attention to where I was going, or caring at all. Suddenly I pricked up my ears. In the distance behind I caught the hoarse warning of a horn. I knew the sound of every tooting in the place. Now the soft autumn breeze bore a new note to me. A car was approaching which

had not come to my notice. Instantly I was interested. I thrust my head out and gave a glance over the road I had come. There, far away, I could see a yellow cloud rising and twirling as if it were the tail of a large red automobile bearing down upon me. The distance was so great that I could not make out anything in detail. I could only observe that the approaching machine was a monster, and was advancing at what appeared to be a marvelous speed.

I was glad enough for something to do. I welcomed the chance of trying conclusions with this intruder. Oh, it was good, after the period of stagnation through which I had passed, to be aroused! All at once I was astir and

aflame and alive.

The one glimpse I had assured me that I should have my hands full. I knew by what I had seen in a short instant that the race of my automobile life was before me. I was in for it, but I exulted in it, and was not going to be downed by it. Fortunately my Great Comet had just been taken apart, gone over and was running splendidly. was confident that what lav in its power to do I could get out of it. Then and there I made up my mind that I would drive it to the limit and over. I felt more impatient for success than at any time in all my life. The resolve not to be beaten was stronger in me than ever before. In the mood in which I was victory appeared more desirable; defeat less to be borne.

No time was to be lost in getting away. If I was to keep the lead which I had, I must be about it. I started on at a greater speed, and I was comforted by noticing the manner in which I was flashing through the landscape. Swift motion in some way always seems to go to my head. A strange exhilaration results from it, and a heedless recklessness follows. Besides, the feeling of the race was upon me. As I swept forward I was tingling with sudden excitement. I was ready for anything.

Now the automobile was pumping away for all it was worth. We were surging on, rocking from side to side

with the slight depressions of the way. A place where a trench had been dug across the road and the earth piled up until it formed a ridge brought a great jounce, as I did not slow down at all. A dog ran out to bark at me, but I tore past so quickly that he was left in a surprised indignation so great as to be beyond his expression. I laughed a little as I caught one fleeting glance

of his helpless bewilderment.

In that part of the country there were few people, so that I could advance without thought of meeting any one. All that I had to do was to keep straight on and get all the power out of the engine that I possibly could. Not an automobile artifice did I omit. Not a trick known to the chauffeurs', trade but I employed. I wished—how I wished that the tops had been off. Without it I knew that I could have gone at a rate ten miles an hour faster. How I regretted that my decks were not cleared for action! At the pace I was going I felt most uncomfortably what the word resistance was, and I mourned over each single square inch of surface exposed to meet it.

At the start I had heard the hoots of my pursuer's warning or defiance. The challenging sound came from a greater distance. Evidently with my impulsive get-off I had left him at once behind. Then silence had succeeded, and as had not the chance to look backward I could not tell how the fortunes of the day were going. Suddenly I caught another blast of the horn. This time it was clear and distinct and close. It smote my ears. I knew that the tooter was directly behind. The whir of the working machinery, the jar of the spring, the hubbub as we plunged forward, prevented my hearing anything except the incessant "honk-honk" almost at my elbow. The enemy was upon me. I set my teeth. My fingers clenched the wheel more fiercely. I bent forward, as if I myself could help to increase the speed.

Alas! a minute had not gone when out of the corner of my eye I perceived the front of the chassis of a flying car. In another instant a great, shining, magnificent, sixty horse-power Gaillard -there was no mistaking it-swept by me. A line-of-battle-ship with the speed of a torpedo-destroyer passing a painted buoy is the only thing which would be like it. I appeared to be left behind as if I were standing still. I was completely out of the race, helplessly distanced, absolutely beaten.

I could have cried. As I have already intimated, I had a strong dislike for the bitter cup of defeat. Now the draft seemed particularly obnoxious. I had to take my medicine. I had taken it, in fact, and the gall and wormwood of it brought the tears in my eyes. Helplessly and hopelessly I checked down. I felt as if the automobile must look as if it were bowing the crest of its proud acetylene headlight.

I came up with my opponent, whom in the heat and dust of encounter I had not seen, and then-

Peering round the side of the hateful conquering car I beheld the smiling face of Jack Scranton.

"You!" I exclaimed desperately. "Yes," he replied, with exasperating serenity; "and glad enough to be here."

"I thought you were away," I said accusatively.

"You see, I came back," he continued. "Got back last night, bringing this Gaillard with me. I had it on the other side, and it has just arrived in this country. That old Roadster I was only using until the Gaillard arrived. I knew that I could beat you with this, and have been waiting for it."

His satisfaction in the machine was maddening. He did not appear to consider my feelings at all. I said to my-

self that I hated him.

"This afternoon," he went on, "I started out at once to find you."

"That was very kind," I said, but his self-absorption was so great that my tone was wholly lost upon him.

"I wanted to show you what this one could do," he exclaimed proudly.

"Well, you have," I answered briefly. "Don't you like it?" he asked, evidently expecting me to heap words of praise on his bubble and coals of fire on his head.

"If you want me to tell you with perfect frankness," I replied decidedly, "I don't at all."

"What!" he gasped in amazement.

"I mean, having you win. I said I could not bear being beaten. I hate it -and I hate you."

"But you said that you would re-

spect-

"Respecting things and people is a performance all very well in its way. It's awfully good as a background, but having the feeling of respect thrust too obviously forward, taking up all the room, shoving out everything else, is a humiliating, trying and exhausting condition."

"Then-" he began blankly.

"If," I complained, "you had wanted to spoil everything, you could not have done it more completely."

"Oh, come!" he said anxiously.

"It's true," I maintained. "I can't think of you pleasantly again. The one thing I cannot suffer is to come off second best. Here you've gone and made my Great Comet look like a gocart. I can never feel satisfied until I am reinstated in my good opinion."
"What can I do?" he urged contrite-

"Burn the Gaillard?"

"That would not make me forget the result of this race. I should still feel your triumph."

He looked at me helplessly.

"There is no escaping it," I con-"I don't want to see you tinued. again.'

"Isn't there any way-" he began. "Not unless I can know that I have not been obliged to bow the head, have not had to pass under the yoke, not been crushed to the earth."

"Is it as bad as that?"

"That's the way that not winning makes me feel, and-good-by," I called

abruptly.

I started away. At first he set out to overtake me, as he easily could have done. Then he evidently changed his mind and slowed down.

If I had been restless before, during the remainder of the late afternoon and

the early evening I was simply one throbbing pulse of impatience. I could not imagine what was the matter with me. If I sat down I could not remain in one place, but jumped up and began to stir aimlessly about. As soon as I commenced to walk, the purposelessness of it vexed me, and I set myself to doing something-all to no purpose. I took a turn at the piano, but my playing degenerated into the most inattentive thrumming. I tried to read, but when I did not behold a blank page before me, I saw a large red automobile, which certainly had no place as an illustration in the book.

I watched the clock anxiously as the moments dragged along. When halfpast nine came and I could feel that I could with some reason go up to have myself dressed for the Allison dance, the relief was really tremendous. The way in which I snapped off Francine's head astonished her and astonished myself. Generally she bullied me, but not that

evening-not that evening.

When I entered the Allison hall which was the ballroom I had regained some degree of calmness. Still in my heart there was the same queer agitation; underneath I was fairly tingling with suppressed excitement. I was wholly puzzled. Apparently the dance was in no way different from the dance to which I had gone the night before, to the one to which I should go the following night, and yet- In a mechanical way, which amounted almost to unconsciousness, I played the part of a walking and talking doll. I danced prettily. I conversed almost intelligently. I even flirted a little.

Just before twelve o'clock I was standing before the great fireplace, empty and banked with ferns and flowers. Suddenly I felt myself forced to look up. I saw in one glance Jack Scranton approaching me. He came down on me through the dancers in a way which carried confusion before him and left torn trains and accusing looks behind him.

"I want to speak to you," he said, pausing before me.

I was engaged for the next two-step.

I remembered it about three hours afterward. Completely forgetting this, I moved away with him at once, leaving little Bobby Sietro as if he did not exist.

"Here's a place," he said, plunging into the palms and seclusion of a little

conservatory.

There we stood, facing one another. "I did not expect to come," he be-

gan.

"I hoped that you would," I gasped.
"I've been longing for this moment when I could hope to see you. It was so when I was away after I had first seen you. I was only waiting to get back. This is not the same as if I had just met you."

"What isn't?" I asked blankly.

"I love you. I suppose it is what they call at first sight, and yet it's dif-

ferent, because of the past. I want to throw myself on your mercy and at your feet."

"Then I've won," I cried joyfully, "and it's all right."

"Is it?" he asked, taking both my hands in his and staring in my face.

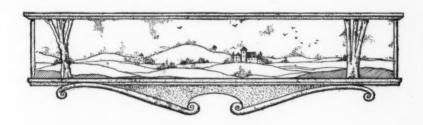
"Yes, it is," I replied, looking back at him for an instant as squarely, and then letting my eyes fall and, if the truth must be told, my head drop on his shoulder.

"No, no; I've won, since I've got

you," he said.

"Never!" I declared promptly but tremulously. Then I surrendered absolutely, with a suddenness which amazed me.

"I admit everything," I cried quickly. "I am beaten, conquered, and and—I like it."



SONNET

TIME doth not fly, nor creep, nor crawl, nor run;
'Tis we that move; Time standeth vast and still,
And keepeth ward o'er valley and o'er hill,
While we, like dewdrops in the morning sun,
Gleam and are gone. Oh, say not, then, that Time
Moves slowly, swiftly; Time is young as when
The first born of the haughty race of men
Rose up and dared death with a soul sublime;
The Summer, Autumn, Winter and the Spring
Stand in amaze as we speed swiftly by,
And Nature's self is ever wondering
That we so soon upon her bosom die;

Say not Time moves—'tis man alone who flies, While stand agape the startled centuries.

ROBERT LOVEMAN.



AT THE GOLDEN SUN

B) Mary B. Mullett





HAT must be midnight striking, though Stuart's smug-faced little French clock will probably insist that it is the middle of the afternoon. It's too flighty to tell the time

of day, much less the time of night.

Nine—ten—eleven—twelve. My
compliments on this unexpected accuracy! Now, if you could manage to
strike a light as well as the hour, I
should appreciate the favor. It's not
exactly hilarious, stumbling around in
a half strange place—a studio at that.
For general outdoorishness, commend
me to a studio. If I lived in one very
long, I'd expect to comb stars out of
my hair some fine morning.

A light! That's better. And a pipe! Better still. Almost wish, though, that I had insisted on going to the hotel, instead of waiting for Stuart here. I'm enough upset without having to smoke any of these ungodly foreign mixtures. Ten years in Paris have corrupted Stuart's judgment of tobacco—though he does seem to have learned a thing or two about girls.

I wonder what he will think he has to tell me—me, who could tell the story better than he can—up to a certain point. He's sure to come home all of a tremble; but I doubt if his hand fumbles the door worse than mine did. He has had his experience, and I've had mine. He has won a girl's heart; I've seen it.

I wonder if she will realize—but she does! Somehow, that's the gripping part of it. She knows as well as I do that the placidly pretty Miss Norton

of this afternoon, singing her cool little songs to the entirely appropriate accompaniment of the clinking teacups, is dead

Or, no! I don't suppose she is dead. That girl still exists in the one who will lie awake to-night—and look back—and look forward. The girl of this afternoon was like—well, not even like a bud; just the green calyx of a bud. Pretty, in its way, but hard, for all that, and shut as tight on what it holds as a fist on gold.

She was pretty, though—the sort of prettiness certain days have; bright and sparkling and clean—clean—clean! Not a soft haze anywhere. Not a cloud, not a shadow. Not any of the still heat, either, that melts all the bars you have laboriously put up about your primal instincts. Not even one of the exhilarating, winy days that make your heart sing. Just a bright, cold, wintry morning, setting your ears tingling instead of your heart.

But she was pretty. She made every other girl there look shop-worn. A rather interesting lot of girls, too, I fancy. Some of them rather queerish about the head. Outside, I mean. Inside, too, perhaps. I should think hanging around these studios would affect anybody. It isn't natural, this having a floor under your feet, four walls shutting you in, but the sky eternally peering at you overhead. It isn't natural.

Perhaps the fact that the disordering influence comes from above accounts for their hair. Stuart says that, as a rule, these American girls, studying art in Paris, are as irreproachable as if they were taking domestic science at Chautauqua. I suppose they put all possible

effervescence into one wildly ebullient coiffure, and then rest calm and cold under all other temptations.

Cold? Humph! I wonder if Stuart will resist the temptation to tell me I was wrong this afternoon about the

coldness of at least one girl.

How smoothly he managed that whole scheme, anyway—if it was a scheme! Maybe I flattered myself unduly, but I thought afterward that he might have wanted me to see Miss Norton, unbiased by the knowledge that he cared for her. Wanted to get one of the impressionistic views he's always doddering about. Well, if he did, fate lined up with him, as usual, and he got it. Why couldn't he have said he was going over there to see his sweetheart, instead of pretending that he wanted me to see the place?

"You've been so curious about the American girls in the Latin Ouarter." he said, "that I'm going to take you where you can study the species to your heart's content. Every afternoon they serve tea over at the American Girls' Some uncommonly sensible Club. woman pays for the thing year in and year out, I think; and any American girl in Paris may go there, and may invite a friend or two as well. I've a standing invitation, and though I don't often go, it's a flattering experience when I do. Some of the students seem to have a pleasing hallucination about my being sort of a genius. And they defer to me, and kowtow to me, till I could patronize any old master that ever sucked a brush-handle."

"And you want me to go and witness the spectacle?" I said. "No, thank you. You might finish by patronizing me."

"But you must go!" he insisted. "You've been wondering how an unprotected American girl can live in Paris without lamentably degenerating. I don't pretend to tell you how they do it, but if you will come over to the Girls' Club, I can prove to you that it is done."

In the state of his feelings for Miss Norton, I suppose my speculations about American girls in Paris had touched him rather too closely. Well, he took a good way of answering me though he was as little satisfied with my second theory as he had been with

my first.

It was a new experience for me, in more ways than one. I thought that a New York man about town was proof against any chance of being disconcerted. But those young women, with their freemasonry of interests and experiences—to both of which I was a perfect stranger—their art lingo, which was almost an unknown tongue to me, and their loose hair and tight morals, soon had me out of my depth; or, at least, in a new element.

Not quite at first, though. Stuart says that I classify people as if they were insects, but that my system is all wrong; that I have such specifications as: Ants—color, black; length, one-quarter inch; diet, mixed. Then everything that is black, a quarter of an inch long, and eats different things, I call an ant. Perhaps he is right. To-day's little drama makes me wonder.

I wasn't troubled by any doubts this afternoon, though. I certainly felt competent to classify every mother's daughter of them, not by any means excepting Miss Norton, in the middle of her song and bowing to Stuart as casually as she would have turned a sheet of music. At least, if she did feel any more emotion, it wasn't visible.

It wasn't simply her appearance; though I have always said that gray eyes, in a woman, were a sign of superabundant gray matter behind them. Another of my inadequate classifications, I suppose. And yet these grayeyed girls are apt to be clear-headed and cool-hearted. I've watched them.

I might have kept on watching without learning anything different if fortune had not favored me for once and let me see a drama of the sort to which she generally admits only the actors.

If Miss Norton hadn't been singing, I might not have been so sure, gray eyes or no gray eyes. But I thought a woman couldn't sing three lines without betraying herself to me. And she sang three verses! Three verses of Schubert. They might as well have

been the multiplication-table. A sweet voice; as clear—and as cool and shadowless—as her eyes. Voice and eyes and that mass of soft, fair hair. Not even her hair was ruffled. The sort of head you might see bowed at St. Thomas' any Sunday, even out of Lent. Well, I can't deny that I was mistaken, but—— Jove! I can't even now reconcile the girl of this afternoon with the one I saw to-night.

"Who is the distractingly pretty girl

at the piano?" I asked Stuart.

I hope that "distractingly pretty" was a sugar coating for my subsequent remarks.

"That is Miss Norton," he bubbled, and I suppose I ought to have guessed the state of affairs, but I was too busy

with my theories.

There were two or three rooms, all pretty well filled, and I looked around with a good deal of curiosity. It interested me. Young men with flowing ties—and hair the same; young men with pointed beards; and boys too young for much more than luxuriant hopes of arriving at the same distinction. Young women with prophetic eyes and pasty skins. Stuart says they don't eat enough, nor of the right sort.

They weren't all like that. Some of them were as pink and white as any healthy American girl. And there were some with no more prophecy in their eyes than there is in a calendar.

Even the prophetic eyes left you cold. At least, they didn't touch me. Their dreams were ambitious; their enthusiasms merely technical. There was one girl who glowed with a positive fire when she talked about that picture of a woman-cat, by Manet, in the Luxembourg. But I soon found she was holding forth about the picture merely as a study in values, not as a revelation of human character-though perhaps Manet's woman isn't altogether human. What the girl cared for was something about the bit of black ribbon on the woman's neck, the different black of the servant behind her, and this, that, and the other tone of white. A study in values? A study in the devil!-begging his pardon.

When I got hold of Stuart again, I told him I had solved the problem.

"You were right," I said. "I don't admit yet that all the American girls over here are the same, and I still insist that Paris is a fiery furnace to put them into. But I see that at least some of them go through it unscathed. The reason, though, is that their natures are proof even against the furnace fires of French passion—the only kind of furnace fires the blooming country knows anything about. Why, these girls have icicles for hearts!"

"Icicles will melt when-hot potatoes

won't!" Stuart retorted.

"But wouldn't you rather have an unmelted hot potato than—" I began. "Oh!" Stuart interrupted; "go off in a corner and juggle your fool metaphors by yourself! Metaphor is like a magician's silk hat. You can

metaphors by yourself! Metaphor is like a magician's silk hat. You can find in it anything you want, from paper-flowers to live rabbits. You can cook an omelet in it, or hatch a duck. But you won't find the secret of a girl's heart in it."

Of course I ought to have seen that his defense was particular, not general. But I was in the saddle, and I suppose I was a bit nettled, too. At any rate, I made a flying leap straight at destruc-

tion.

"You're a painter," I said, "and you look at faces while I look at what is behind them. Take Miss Norton, for instance. You see her coloring and her features, which are—"

"We won't discuss Miss Norton, please, old fellow," Stuart interrupted.

I wish he had waited a minute. I was going to say, "which are exquisite." That would have let us both down a bit easier. As it was, I had hard work to pick my wits up and attempt a congratulation.

"Confound you, Stuart!" I said.
"Why did you let me go on and make such an ass of myself? Miss Norton—as I was going to say—is as pretty as a picture. Prettier than any of you fellows can paint! And as for her heart, I was very foolish to think that, because she doesn't wear it on her sleeve, she doesn't have one in its prop-

er place-which, of course, is in your

keeping."

I tried to speak as if I thought Miss Norton and a grande passion for Stuart were companions for life, but I didn't believe a word of it. I had a sneaking pity for him, and I couldn't help being rather proud of my own perspicuity when he said:

"You misunderstood me. Miss Norton doesn't agree with you—and me—about the proper place for her heart. But she has one. Don't make any mistake about that. And if I could win it, I should think myself the luckiest man

in the world."

I had my own opinion on that subject, but I had substituted discretion for theories, so I beamed benevolently upon him.

"Then she's only waiting for the psychological moment to come," I said. "The Stuarts were always winners in love."

He was as serious as an ostrich, and shook his head dismally, but, as soon as the song was over, introduced me to Miss Norton.

I was glad they fixed up the dinner with Carhart and his wife. I wanted to study Miss Norton a bit more, and see if I could come 'round at all to Stuart's way of thinking. He's a good old chap; too fine a fellow to have his doll stuffed with sawdust. But I certainly thought it was going to be, even after I had watched Miss Norton

through seven courses.

She was bright and she was friendly, and she was enthusiastic enough; but there was a baffling quality about it all. If the talk was about pictures, she was interested only in the technique; though perhaps that was natural, for an art student among artists. I didn't count. But it was the same if the talk was about books. She didn't seem to take account of anything but the style. And if it was of people, she somehow failed to go below just what they said and did. By the time we had got to coffee, I was sure she was an unusually clever girl, but—pshaw! I'd as soon have married a nice, companionable set of books in a Cobden-Sanderson binding.

When it was decided that we should go to the Soleil d'Or, she seemed to like the idea, but she was as impersonal about that as she had been about every-

thing else.

Carhart and Stuart had been there, but it was a new experience for the rest of us. A queer place to be called "The Golden Sun"! Not much more than a cellar; a floored cellar, to be sure, plastered and ceiled and huddled full of wire tables and chairs. But so low that when the poets who recited their own sonnets, and the musicians who played their own compositions, stood on the little scrap of a platform, their heads were as close to the ceiling as they were, all the time, to the clouds.

As we went through the café overhead, to the steep little stairway which plunged almost straight down to this basement, Stuart pointed out the corner where poor old Verlaine used to drink and dream whenever he was not

in La Salpêtrière.

The place was pretty full when we got down there, so that Miss Norton and I were at one table, the Carharts at another in front of us, while Stuart had to find a place just around a jog in the room. I felt a little awkward and apologetic at first at having Miss Norton with me, but I soon decided that she didn't care much one way or the other.

I wonder if she did care. I wonder if she was simply refusing to recognize the depths of her own nature, because they were vague and abysmal. Perhaps she was afraid of them and ignored them—or tried to—as pitfalls to be avoided by every nice girl who loves light rather than darkness. Well, I suppose Stuart will know one of these days—and I won't—and it's none of my business, anyway. A cat may look at a king, but a man has no right to look, unbidden, into a girl's soul.

Another fine theory; but circumstances, which alter cases, wipe out theories. The Golden Sun was a circumstance neither Miss Nortor nor I had counted on. It flashed a rather blinding illumination into the carefully ignored depths of her nature. She had

to see them. And I-well, I did look,

whether I had to or not.

What a creature that French woman was! She and Miss Norton could have stretched out their hands and touched each other, they sat so close together; and yet they seemed as far apart in nature as if they were not made of the same flesh and blood. Miss Norton's fairness and delicacy and aloofness were a startling contrast to that woman—swarthy, passionate, her soul looking out of her eyes with an unreserve which was half revolting, half fascinating.

Evidently she did not know that Stuart came in with us. I don't think she had even seen him before the violinist played. I had noticed her. She sat resting her head against the wall behind her, her dark eyes dull and brooding, not paying much attention to the young men around her, or to those who had been spouting their verses

from the platform.

I don't know whether she had ever met Stuart before or not, I don't believe so. I think it was merely that the music stirred her, and that Stuart's head was in line with her eyes, when they looked up, seeking whom they might devour. With that woman's temperament nothing more was necessary. She was tinder. The music and Stuart's face struck the spark.

There was fire enough then and to spare; fire enough to burn the recollection of her into my memory as well, I imagine, as into Miss Norton's. I couldn't quite make out Stuart. Whenever I moved so that I could catch a glimpse of him, he was staring straight at the low ceiling, his head back against

the wall.

I suppose he was thinking of Miss Norton. Love is a strong tide. Throw an emotion into it and it is swept with the flood. You must wait till the ebb before you can expect it to drift to some other shore. Stuart's love undoubtedly was setting too strongly toward Miss Norton to let any of his feelings find another point to break on.

I shall go again to The Golden Sun on the chance of hearing that woman sing. A siren's song, perhaps; but, ye gods! a change from the chattering of

magpies.

When she went up to the platform there was some applause, but almost immediately it died away into a curious hushed expectancy. She didn't really have much of a voice, as a voice; but when she half sang, half spoke, the lines, with the violin as an accompaniment, it was like a thread of flame

through you.

I don't think I should have remembered there was such a person in existence as Miss Norton, if things had been different. But when I found that it was Stuart at whom the woman looked and sang, I stole a glance at the girl. Evidently she hadn't yet made the discovery I had. She seemed much as she had, except that there was something troubled in her eyes. It was only a shadow, but there hadn't been even a shadow before. The woman went on singing, in that wonderful voice—which was not so much a voice as it was fire, tears, kisses; a respectable portion of heal.

I watched Miss Norton without letting her know it. Her eyes were darkening, the pupil widening as if it were a door being slowly forced open. Suddenly she leaned forward so that she could see at whom the woman was singing. I held my breath then, but she only looked back again with a little,

puzzled frown.

At the end of the song there was a moment's silence, then a storm of applause which threatened to bring the low ceiling down on our heads. The woman sang again; the most pleadingly tender thing this time. Still they would not let her stop, and if there is a note of love that she did not sound, then I've never even dreamed it.

Through it all she kept her eyes on Stuart; the sort of look which was so much like a physical touch that it seemed impossible he should not feel it as he would have felt the touch of her hand or of her lips. I moved once in awhile so as to get a glimpse of him; but he sat with his side toward the

platform and was always staring at the

ceiling.

Miss Norton, too, looked toward him once or twice, though I think she tried not to. Finally she sat quite still, her fingers twisted together, the color gone from her cheeks, watching the woman as fixedly as the woman, in her turn, watched Stuart.

I was a little bit revolted at first. I

said to myself:

"Oh, yes, it would be the same with any other china doll! It can't burn with a flame of its own. All it can do is to give back a flickering reflection of some fire outside of itself."

Another of my accommodating metaphors! But Stuart was right. Metaphor didn't give me the clue to what was happening in Miss Norton's heart. I dare say there was some reflection in it, but there was a good deal more than that. Jealousy, for one thing, I believe. But there was more than that. Maybe she had been coming to it for a long time; studying French with her pretty ears pricked up to detect the subtleties of the accent vrai, but deaf to what was stirring in her heart.

She's not the introspective sort. She's not given to analyzing emotions. That was plain. And I think that must be the explanation of it. She wasn't the reflection of the French woman's emotions. It was the other way around. It came home to her that the French woman was reflecting Helen Norton's emotions—the ones she was capable of, at least. It needed an actual voice, speaking to her very ears, to tell her what love might mean to her.

It was a tolerably complete exposition of it that the French woman gave us. The accent a little strong on the passion part; but not dwelling there altogether. She ran very nearly the whole gamut before she came slowly back to her place close to Miss Norton.

The woman sat a trifle farther forward than we did, and when she leaned back against the wall she looked straight at Stuart, though he would have had to turn his head to see her. It seems to me he must have felt her eyes on him before long. I can't ex-

plain his unconsciousness—if he was unconscious—unless it was that he fitted the singing to his own thoughts and they absorbed him. But the woman seemed bent on compelling him to look at her, and it seems to me she must have succeeded very soon.

It was a situation which threatened to become more and more awkward. If Miss Norton hadn't done what she did, the moment she did, I should have made some excuse for speaking to Stuart and getting him to change places with me. A blundering move, but it would have let the French woman know that he was with our party. I did not imagine that Miss Norton could devise anything, unless it might be some commonplace pretense of being faint. And I believed she had a sort of pride which would make her refuse to show the white feather by escaping that way.

I'm inclined to think she acted as she did from mixed motives. Her jealousy may have been stirred, but that perhaps was the least of her feelings, since Stuart seemed perfectly unconscious of the woman's having singled him out. More probably the woman's attitude seemed to Miss Norton's awakened love an unwarrantable intrusion, an unpleasant sort of competition, forced on her by an unexpected and unworthy rival.

But I believe there was something else in her mind; something like gratitude and something like consideration, too. Under the circumstances, nothing exactly cheering awaited the rash intruder between herself and Stuart. If the woman succeeded in forcing his notice, it could only mean a rebuff for her; and while she might not have minded that, except as a frosty touch to her pride, I believe the thought of it did hurt Miss Norton.

At least, it seemed to me there was something like that in her face when she leaned forward. I suppose I should have tried to stop her if I had realized what she was going to do. Yes, and have been a fool for my pains. After all, it takes a woman to read a woman. Though those two—well, I think I'll have to give up trying to classify human insects.

The French woman gave a little start and looked around when Miss Norton touched her arm. It seems as if Stuart must have felt cold when she turned her eyes from him. The violinist was playing again; trying to make his violin sing as the woman had—and not succeeding. Miss Norton spoke so low that certainly no one heard her but the woman and me:

"Ne faites pas ça. Il est à moi."

Her tone wasn't exactly gentle, nor pleading, nor defiant, nor dignified; but it was all of them and more. There was a quiet sort of fellowship in it, as if she said: "I know you will recognize and allow my rights. Don't do that. He belongs to me."

They looked straight into each other's eyes for a moment. Then the woman

bent close to Miss Norton.

"He belongs to you?"

"He belongs to me," Miss Norton repeated, the color creeping into her face.

"Très bien!" said the woman. "And

you?"

The color came in a flood then, and Miss Norton hesitated. Still she looked at the woman, but it was more as if she were looking into her own self. And something grew in her face—flowered in it, under my very eyes! For I did look.

"Yes," she whispered finally. I know, for she nodded her head.

The woman's eyes changed wonderfully. They were positively wistful for the fraction of a second; then she smiled as if she were relinquishing nothing more important than a seat for which somebody else held the coupon.

"A la bonne heure!" she said, still in a low voice, but as gaily as if she had just realized her dearest wish. "I am nothing less than enchanted to wish

mademoiselle joy!"

And with that she was suddenly another woman: listening to the music and the soaring sonnets; applauding extravagantly; laughing with the young man near her; finishing her consommation; looking over, through, or, better still, at Stuart with coolly careless eyes.

I think Miss Norton wondered what I thought of her speaking to the French woman. She knew that neither Stuart nor the Carharts had seen the incident, but I could feel that she looked at me, half timidly, half defiantly. I assumed so absorbing an interest in the violinist, however, that I positively started when she spoke to me.

Did I not think the place very in-

teresting?

I thought the place very interesting. Weren't some of the drawings clever? Very clever; especially that charcoal head where the crack in the plastering had been allowed to play the rôle of a Roman nose.

She seemed to be reassured, and promptly slipped back to her own thoughts, though they were somewhat disturbed, I could see, by the startling completeness of the French woman's change of manner. Suddenly Stuart came around to our table.

"You're pale," he said to Miss Norton. "Aren't you tired? The air is bad, anyway. Why not all go back to Carhart's, instead of slowly asphyxia-

ting down here?"

I confess I was surprised that Miss Norton kept close to me when we got up to the street. We were all going to walk, for the sake of the fresh air; and I, making the mistake, I suppose, of judging a girl by myself, thought she would make sure of Stuart for her companion. Still, I liked her the better for avoiding a promenade à deux with him just then, and she and I walked to the Carharts' together. We all went out to the dining-room at first, but I left the rest there while Mrs. Carhart skirmished for something to eat, and betook myself to the studio.

It must be that they're getting an influence over me, too. If there's a studio around, I go mooning off toward it. So I drifted into Carhart's, and was standing there in the dark, looking up at the stars and feeling as if I'd gone walking without my hat, when Miss Norton came into the next room and

sat down at the piano.

There was a rose-shaded lamp there, but even in that light I could see that she was pale. She touched the keys, then stopped, as if she lacked the cour-

age to go on. But she could see—so could I—through the open door and along the corridor to the dining-room, where Stuart was standing alone. At least, he seemed to be alone. I suppose Carhart had joined his wife on the skirmish-line.

Miss Norton looked at Stuart a moment; then she began that song the French woman sang—the pleadingly tender one. Evidently she knew it.

If I could hear such singing—but I might as well go and listen to the French woman! If I should wait until I was as deaf as the manikin over there, I should never again hear a woman sing as Miss Norton did. Fate let me see this play out; but it won't happen again. And as for any one singing to me that way—well, because Stuart's magpie proved to be a nightingale, it isn't to be expected that all magpies are similarly translatable.

Her singing wasn't a mere echo of the French woman's. I couldn't have forgiven that. It was her own heart she put into it; true and warm and tender; a tremulous but unequivocating avowal.

Stuart had been smoking and idly examining a picture; but when she began, he turned quickly, then stood listening as if he feared to miss a note, for she sang in a low voice. Only one verse; then her hands dropped from the keys and she watched Stuart. As soon as he realized that she was not going on, he threw his cigar away and came quickly along the corridor.

That seemed to frighten the girl, and she sprang up as if she meant to escape. But before she had gone more than a few steps, Stuart was in the room and was speaking her name. When she buried her face in her hands, however, and shrank back, he stopped

short. Of course it was respectful and delicate and all that, but it was a terribly critical moment for anything like hesitation, and I had an idea that my little romance would go to pieces before my eyes when he began stammering and apologizing.

"I beg your pardon, Helen! You did not mean—you did not want me to hear —or, at least, to think——"

I ground my teeth. Couldn't he see that she had given him his chance? He might as well accuse her of a mistake, in having sung as she had, as to accuse himself for having heard her. I thought it was all over. But I was wrong again. The bully little girl braced right up. I could have hugged her myself.

"Yes, I did!" she said. "I did want you to hear—and I did want you to think—whatever you want to."

Well, I fancy she was properly hugged, even if I couldn't attend to it. By the mercy of Providence, who must have been watching me through the skylight and have seen my predicament, I found a door into the hall, and was going through the motions of read-

Radiant? It's a wonder Carhart couldn't see what a chance he had to save candles. He's a pretty blind sort of a stick, though, even if he is an

Now, Mrs. Carhart can see

ing in the salon when I was sum-

moned to the dining-room.

about as far as the next one, and—
Here comes Stuart! Treading on air—and stumbling on the top step.
Hand strong as steel—but door-knob extremely wobbly. There! he's got it

open.
"Hello, you confounded, self-satisfied, fool-for-luck dog, you! Which will you have first, apologies or congratulations?"



artist.



The Influence of the Automobile



RICH man's toy is becoming the pivot of one of the most remarkable social changes America has experienced. Man and his motor-car are altering the face of the man.

Yesterday we were calling it the luxurious fad of the millionaire. To-morrow we will recognize it as the necessity of the many.

It is the final answer to that disturbing question: "Is the American home life disappearing?"

It gives the final "No" with emphasis, and backs the negation with facts.

And isn't the tendency logical? Since Adam and Eve hid in the cave, the household instinct was strong in man up to the time when it looked as though it would be squeezed out of him in the cañons of a great city.

The flat-dweller was a necessity, not an evolution. The real man still yearns for his home in the open. As long as he had to be a strap-hanger he preferred a flat. But with the advent of the motor-car came the vision of a new life. The fireside was safe from that hour.

The automobile is the one magnificent tie that connects the country to the town. Thousands of men and women who have always longed to live in the country could not be persuaded to depend on suburban trains, and refused to spend so many hours of their lives with a watch in one hand and a railroad schedule in the othet. To them the automobile has come as a bow of

promise. They know that country life is now possible. The ring of a bell and the motor is at the door, the chauffeur waiting to take them wherever they wish. There is no consulting of time-tables nor scrambling for seats.

It makes little difference what hour of the day or night one wishes to travel, so the roads are good. The world is yours if you have an automobile.

The suburbanite is no longer obliged to decline an invitation to a theater-party in town or to a dinner-party fifteen miles away up the road, nor must he dress hours before the time appointed in order to catch a certain train. Thus, for those who would be of the world, but not in it, the automobile removes one of the greatest obstacles to residence in the country.

It used to be a bit awkward to have a dinner invitation for eight o'clock in town and be forced to take a train which left your country town at halfafter six and arrived in the city a quarter-past seven, necessitating either a dreary forty-five minutes' wait in the station, with all the loungers gaping at your evening clothes, or reaching your hostess' house nearly an hour before time, to linger aimlessly in the dressing or drawing-room while the latter made her toilet.

Hundreds of people preferred to decline invitations which occasioned so much inconvenience and put them at such a disadvantage.

But things have changed. Invitations are made and accepted with the automobile as the controlling factor. Be the car expensive or cheap, be it large

or small, it at least can make the run quicker than a local train, and with far

more pleasure and comfort.

Women no longer soil their evening gowns on the dusty seats of the suburban train. The most costly frock may be worn with security. There is no trailing in the dirt, no cushions that millions have sat upon, no crushing, no tearing. Gowns can be as carefully arranged as in a brougham, and their wearers kept as warm and snug as by their own firesides.

Moreover, people who would not think of allowing their horses to be subjected to the stress of an American winter, or submit themselves to the annoyance of a cold drive to the station, have no scruples about this snorting affair of

iron and steel.

With luxuriously comfortable cushions of limousine leather, and with glass to protect from the force of the wind, even the late coming home, formerly the suburbanite's greatest horror, is made a thing of genuine pleasure.

Instead of hurrying out of the play and opera before the last act to catch a suburban train, the man with the automobile enjoys the full price of his ticket, and can go with unruffled complacency to a little after-the-theater supper, for he knows that his retiring hour will not be materially delayed.

Even the joys of country houseparties can be given the additional spice of urban dissipation, and be transported bodily into town for social diversions.

To the business man, the automobile has come as a veritable deus ex machina. The toil in the office must still be his, yet he has but to step into his motorcar at the end of the day, take an inspiring spin over a stretch of good road, and the recreation and relaxation of life in the country are realities.

Financiers, captains of industry, political leaders, who rarely dare to be out of reach of the office, have heretofore clung to city life for many of the months of the year, because they could not afford to be dependent on trains in cases of emergency.

To-day they live the life of the old planters, knowing that the ring of the telephone can be answered by a swift run to the city, with little time lost.

No one realizes the extent of the family exodus from town more than the apartment-house builder. Daily he offers novel and marvelous inducements to keep the urbanite within his walls. He erects buildings de luxe, with a garage on every floor large enough to store several automobiles and to lodge the chauffeur. An enormous elevator hoists machines and occupants to their respective stories. But all to little purpose. The people are awake to new prospects; the scope of their vision no longer is narrowed down to a dull stretch of city pavement. Henceforth. there must be vistas of blue sky and waving tree-tops and grassy lawns.

It is not the rich only that have taken so eagerly to the automobile, as statistics go far to show. Last year twenty-eight thousand cars were built and sold in the United States. During 1906 one of the leading manufacturers of automobiles prophesies that one hundred thousand cars will be sold. What does that mean? Simply that the toy of the rich is a toy no longer. It is a necessity. The man of moderate means finds it cheaper, more wholesome, and more satisfactory to own his motor-car and live outside of the big cities.

More than that. The plan on foot for three or four men of small means in suburban towns to form clubs for the common use of an automobile to and from the city every day, shows the way things are tending. People realize that such an expense, even out of slender purses, does not amount to much more than railroad fare, and that it gives them a greater chance for perfect health, which is probably the fad of the twentieth century.

Clerks who must stand or sit at a desk for eight or nine hours a day; department heads in great shops, who rarely get a chance at a good breath of pure air; government clerks, who must toil from nine until four in a heated, close atmosphere—all the men who grow old two decades before nature intended, and who look at life from a grayer point of view than the athlete and the sports-

man, find that the first price of an automobile shared between four men is the best investment offered for their

money.

They are clubbing together like this all along the lines of suburban travel, and the success of the plan has made the country beckon with an alluring finger to the great masses of clerical toilers and men who are working at comparatively small wage.

The experience of one of these auto-

commuters is very interesting.

"I have been growing old and tired," he said, "toiling away on a great newspaper, with its enervating smell of ink and metal, and the unwholesome, close quarters. I had a salary that was sufficient to keep us nicely in a modest way in a little flat, but the doctor suggested a change of air and manner of

life if I wished to keep well.

"My wife and I talked over many plans by which we could get into the country, but none seemed feasible until a man who has similar work told of his experience with the auto-club and a country house. Instantly we saw the horizon lift. We looked into the matter of such houses, and found a most artistic little affair, with a garden at the back and two fine old trees in front. Three other men in the neighborhood eagerly joined me in the purchase of a motor-car.

"My own experience has made me such an enthusiast for the country for the man of small means, with the automobile as factor, that I am trying to

convert the world."

The woman of the family, whether the wife of a man of wealth or of small means, finds that the wheels of house-keeping are just as well oiled now in the country as in the town. She does not have to forego toothsome pleasures because she is several miles from the station and well away from the city market. The automobile delivery wagons bring anything and everything to her kitchen door.

The man who would like to bring a few other men to dinner at his country house, and yet finds little fun in burdening himself with extra luxuries on the train, will not hesitate to tuck them into the automobile along with his friends, and take them home.

Another inducement, brought about by the automobile, toward building up a broad and successful country life in America, is the assurance of prompt medical aid in case of illness. This is a factor of almost inestimable value in persuading families to establish homes in the country. The motor-car has pushed the familiar little rickety buggy and shabby old horse of the country doctor into the background, and now the rural physician speeds about in an incredible short space of time.

A glance at the splendidly kept roads which are developing in America further emphasizes the reason for claiming that home life in the country is on the increase. Pikes are plentiful. Citizens of the country gladly pay to keep the byways as clean of obstacles as the highways. Good roads are fast becoming a mania with these fugitives from the city's wear and tear and tension.

And in current literature also is shown the trend of social conditions. Just now publishers are feeling the impress of country life on books. Nature books, bird books, commuters' diaries, and tales of experience, books of vagabondia, are all demanded and eagerly read. American people are exuberant over their return to country life as the only genuine way of living.

How delighted the Concord sage would have been to see such a return in his day! It was he, you remember, who gave this admonition to those who would lead a happy existence: Lay down diamonds and take up spades.

The twentieth century finds us becoming rapidly a nation of home-builders in the country; the middle class as

well as the millionaires.

All the different methods of rapid transit contribute to this growth, but the automobile more than any other one form of locomotion is the dominant factor in this healthy return to the grass and the leaves; this leaving of the mortar and the asphalt as a mere market-place and the arena of flitting amusement.

LADY PAM'S BRIDGE DEBTS



D) MR.S. C. N. WILLIAMSON



ACK ADRIANCE admired Pamela Sylvain more than any girl he had ever seen, but he did not know her, and, though he had thought of several very clever ways of making her

acquaintance, so far he had never been able, as he would have said himself,

to "bring any of them off."

He was in a Swiss hotel, and she was in the same hotel; so that on the face of it the matter looked simple enough; but appearances were in this case deceitful, although Jack Adriance was an American, with all the fertile-mindedness of his countrymen.

Perhaps the difficulty lay in the fact that she was not American. She was Lady Pamela Sylvain; and by dint of discreet questioning—Burke not being obtainable at Löwenfels—and unflagging observation, Adriance had discovered a great deal that was interesting

about her.

Answers to inquiries had told him that she was the daughter of the late Earl of Revel, famous as having been the poorest peer in England: that her father had died when Lady Pamela was twelve; that she was now twenty; that she and her mother were the poor relations of a great many very distinguished but not particularly sympathetic people; that her relatives would doubtless suddenly remember how pretty and sweet she was, if she happened by any extraordinary stroke of fortune to make a good marriage; that the present Lord Revel, a distant cousin, was already very much married, thus there was nothing to hope or fear from that direction; that Pamela's mother was

saving money by paying a visit—she was said never to pay anything else—to a friend of her girlhood, who was frumpish and not in society, and could do nothing for Pamela; that no one knew why on earth Mrs. Fox-Leffingwell had asked Pamela to travel with her for the summer, though every one would very much like to know, as the lady hated girls, and there must be some reason.

This was all that three old maids and one middle-aged bachelor could tell Jack Adriance. But that indefatigable observation of his put him in possession of numerous other facts: that Lady Pamela was the prettiest creature on earth; that he was not the only male being who thought so; that a beast of a man, called Sir Thomas Potterson, was one of the others; that Mrs. Fox-Leffingwell was a great friend of Sir Thomas'; and that between them they scarcely gave any one else a chance to get within staring distance of Lady Pamela Sylvain.

Sir Thomas was very rich. If he had not been he would not have been called Sir Thomas, for there was the *tache* of a ready-made clothing business upon him, which had had to be erased as far as possible by an application of a hundred thousand charity-dinner turkeys and a huge check for a hospital.

Mrs. Fox-Leffingwell was youngish, and was still living on the reputation of great beauty, which now was perhaps only paint-deep, but kept her smart and popular. After Cowes was over, she usually disappeared for a month and buried herself in the youth-renewing mud of some German Bad, to appear again in Scotland invigorated and ready for conquests; but it was August, and

here she was at Löwenfels, where hardly anybody in her set ever came—quite a tourists' place—and she was chaperoning a girl for the first time in her life.

Jack Adriance was "doing Europe." He was too young, and too good-looking, people thought, to be an American millionaire. He had no motor-car, no airs, no valet, and did not appear even to have dyspepsia, so his fellow guests in the best hotel of Löwenfels allowed him to amuse himself as he pleased without bothering themselves about him; and it amused him to watch Lady Pamela Sylvain. At least, it amused him at first; but very soon it passed beyond that stage. He thought of Pamela continually, and wondered how everything was going to end.

Mrs. Fox-Leffingwell made a point of not knowing any one stopping in her hotel, or any other hotel, except Sir Thomas Potterson, who was evidently an old acquaintance; so it seemed impossible for Adriance to be properly introduced; and Pamela never dropped her handkerchief or her book, or needed

to have her life saved.

For a time Adriance hoped that Sir Thomas Potterson had come to Löwenfels for Mrs. Fox-Leffingwell. They walked up and down the wide hotel balcony in the moonlight together for several evenings running, after his arrival, talking in low voices and looking as if the world outside had no existence for them. Meanwhile, Pamela read a novel in Mrs. Fox-Leffingwell's private sitting-room, where she could be seen dimly behind the thin curtains and between half-closed persiennes.

But on the third evening Adriance was smoking in an arbor which commanded a glorious view of lake and snow mountains, and was called the Minnie Haukrühe. Even there he was thinking about Lady Pamela, and how it would be possible to meet her in a way not too appallingly unconventional, when suddenly he heard her name spoken. "I say, Lady Pam, you're the hardest girl to get on with I ever saw," remarked a man's, voice just outside the arbor. "Isn't she, Mrs. Leff?"

There was something in the tone

which made Jack Adriance understand all at once that it was not for "Mrs. Leff" that Potterson had come to Switzerland. He would have liked very much to stay where he was; but, of course, he got up and walked out of Minnie Haukrühe at once.

In the path were Sir Thomas Potterson, Mrs. Fox-Leffingwell, and Lady Pamela Sylvain. As he passed, throwing away his cigarette, the girl looked

up at him in the moonlight.

It was rather an impersonal sort of glance, but there was an appeal in it—the wistful, almost unconscious, appeal of lonely and helpless girlhood to something strong, which might be kind. She did not know what was in her eyes, Jack was sure, but he was instantly aware that she was not happy.

"Perhaps she's homesick, poor child," he thought; but if he could believe gossip, she had no home, and her mother was not the sort of woman for whom a young girl would yearn with heart-

burnings.

He began to feel from this moment that—as he expressed it—there was "a game of some sort on between those

two.'

"Those two" were Sir Thomas Potterson and Mrs. Fox-Leffingwell; and the more Jack saw of the party, the more he grew convinced that the woman had invited Lady Pamela Sylvain to visit her at Löwenfels with a special

object.

After the two or three evenings of promenades on the balcony, Mrs. Fox-Leffingwell changed her tactics. did everything to throw the man and the girl together, and clearly she was not the sort of person to give up for unselfish reasons a valuable admirer. She was a widow, therefore marriageable; she was extravagant, and the thousand or two a year with which she was credited would weigh next to nothing in the scales of her expenditure: therefore, if the millionaire had been within her own reach, she would not have deliberately handed him over to a younger and prettier woman.

In Jack Adriance's mind a definite theory took form, founded on the steely glitter in Mrs. Fox-Leffingwell's blue eyes, the hard lines round her Cupid's bow mouth, and the quick frown of her dark brows whenever Lady Pamela

snubbed Sir Thomas.

The young man believed that "Mrs. Leff" had been particularly hard up, and that the millionaire had offered to help her out of her difficulties if she gave him a chance to win this beautiful and high-bred girl, whose husband—whatever his own antecedents—would be connected with some of the best

families in England.

Pamela Sylvain, if she were nothing but herself, would be a bride for any man to be proud of, Jack thought; but the daughter of an earl, too poor to choose as she would, was exactly the sort of wife a coarse-minded, ambitious parvenu like the retired clothes merchant would be likely to look for. He must know that he was physically unattractive, that he had an unconqueraably swaggering manner, that in moments of excitement his "h's" trembled on their pedestal, and that it would take all his money to sweeten him as a dose in the mouth of such a girl as Pamela. His success would depend, he must see, and Tack could not help knowing, on the girl's bringing up and disposition. If she loved the good things of the world better than she loved the real things of life, she would accept him by and by, and perhaps be contented. But lack Adriance, standing afar off, and watching the game in which he had no chance to take a hand, felt it would be unbearable to him if he had to see it end in that way.

For some days "Lady Pam"—as he hated to hear Potterson call her—was apparently amenable to the plans being made for her. She played croquet with Sir Thomas, sat with him on the balcony after lunch, when Mrs. Fox-Leffingwell had excused herself, and even drove with him once or twice in his automobile. "She's going to do it," Jack said gloomily to himself; "that

beast!"

But one evening Lady Pam did not come to dinner.

Jack Adriance, at his little table not

far from Mrs. Fox-Leffingwell's, in the great white dining-room, saw the lady raise her eyebrows and shrug her shoulders ever so slightly to Potterson, at a distance, then saw Potterson rise from his table and go to hers. A place was laid for him there, and he and "Mrs. Leff" talked earnestly to each other.

She appeared to be asking questions, which the big man answered sulkily, after which, it seemed—or Jack imagined it—that she was attempting consolation: Then it was the man's turn to ask questions, the woman's to answer, but she was gay and sportive, not

sulky.

The next day Sir Thomas Potterson drove away in his motor-car, and did not return to dinner. Whether it was because of his absence or for some other reason, instead of going to her private sitting-room, as she usually did after taking coffee on the balcony, Mrs. Fox-Leffingwell remained there.

It was a wide balcony; nevertheless, as Jack Adriance paced up and down with a cigarette, he could hear snatches of conversation while passing the various groups of hotel guests. He heard Lady Pam ask Mrs. Fox-Leffingwell if she might not go in and finish her book; he heard the elder woman beg her to remain; and, coming back to their side of the balcony after a stroll, he was surprised to see Mrs. Fox-Leffingwell chatting very pleasantly with two ladies who, for ten days, had been visibly and vainly dying to know her.

He had curiosity enough to wish that he had been near to see how the acquaintance had come about; but he had stopped to speak with a man he knew slightly, and had been out of 'the way perhaps for half-an-hour. By the time that he had appeared on the scene again, the friendship had progressed far enough for talk of bridge, and Mrs. Fox-Leffingwell was saying that she missed her favorite pastime dreadfully. "Lady Pamela and I are so bored," she remarked.

"But I don't play bridge," Lady Pam

"We will teach you—won't we?" returned Mrs. Leff.

When Jack made his next round they had all vanished, and a bright light streaming through the lace curtains of Mrs. Fox-Leffingwell's private sittingroom suggested that the two "climbers" had been raised to the seventh heaven by an invitation to an impromptu bridge party in distinguished society.

Jack, as it happened, had been nice to the elder and less interesting of the pair, and now his quick eye saw a chance for virtue's reward. She might introduce him to Lady Pam. Several days passed, however, before he found an opportunity of inducing the lady to do so—it cost him a large bunch of roses, a box of chocolates, and four volumes of Tauchnitz—but all this time Sir Thomas Potterson and his motorcar had been missing, and Jack's mind had been comparatively at ease.

It was after the gift of the two latest Tauchnitz that Miss Benson said: "Perhaps I could introduce you to Mrs. Fox-Leffingwell and that sweet little Lady Pamela if you are fairly decent at bridge. You see, my friend, Miss Miller, is going away, and dear Mrs. Fox-Leffingwell is so wedded to the game that I dare say she'll be glad of

another hand."

So it had been bridge, Jack said to himself. He could play well enough, though he liked poker better; but when he had been introduced to Mrs. Fox-Leffingwell on the balcony, where she and Lady Pam were having iced coffee, he could accept an invitation to play after dinner, without fear that he would be disgraced in the eyes of the divinity.

Lady Pam paid little attention to him at first, though he was a very good-looking young man. But he was her partner that night, and as they lost a good deal, their misfortunes drew them together. Lady Pam gave Jack several glances which, though merely expressive of an innocent fellow feeling, almost made the young man lose his head as well as his money.

The next afternoon Sir Thomas came back, and not only was there no more bridge, but Mrs. Fox-Leffingwell seemed somewhat inclined to forget the existence of the other players. Her

bow to poor Miss Benson and to Jack Adriance on the way to lunch might better have been no bow at all. She even got between him and Pamela, so that the girl could not see him as they passed.

"We were stop-gaps," Adriance said to himself angrily. "But I'm not going to be thrown over that way, like a

used glove."

There was a pine forest behind the hotel, which commanded a glorious view and was provided with several seats and summer-houses; but as a steep hill must be climbed to reach it, very few people went there. It seemed to Jack that the music of the wind among the trees would suit his mood that day, and after luncheon, when almost every one else was taking a siesta or reading a novel, he strode up to the woods, making vaguely furious plans for the punishment of Mrs. Fox-Leffingwell.

He had visited the place two or three times before, and remembered a rustic summer-house, walled in by great pinetrees and almost overhanging the edge of a cliff. If he chose to "grizzle" for half-an-hour in that seclusion, he could

do so undisturbed.

One climbed a curious knoll, and then descended suddenly upon the summer-house. Jack plunged in, down a narrow path slippery with pine-needles, and came face to face with Lady Pam.

If only she had been looking at the view, she would have had her back to him as he entered, and then he would not have known that she was crying. But she was past caring for views, and was making use of the summer-house as a refuge. She had her head on her arms, flung out across the rickety rustic table, and was sobbing wofully.

If it had been any other girl, probably Jack Adriance would have gone out again faster than he came in, but this girl's grief was more to him than the united wailing of all the other women on earth would have been. He could not endure to go quietly out and leave her to bear it alone. How thankful he was now that, at least in a sort of way, he knew her.

"Why, Lady Pamela!" he stammered. "Do forgive me. But-can't I do some-

thing?"

The girl looked up, startled, her cheeks flushed, her beautiful auburn hair tumbled. "No-no, thank you," she choked, trying to be polite. "It's

nothing. Please go."

"I can't. I simply can't," he said, standing still in the doorway. "Look here, Lady Pamela, don't think me a presumptuous beast for staying here when you tell me to go; but you know it isn't as if I were a stranger."

"I've only known you since yesterday," murmured the girl, trying to dry her eyes with a soaked handkerchief.

"But I've known you for a fortnight -ever since I've been here; and there hasn't been a day when I wouldn't have given all I had just to meet you. But I won't talk of that. It's got nothing to do with this. Lady Pamela, perhaps we Americans are made differently from other men. I don't know; but I do know we just can't see a woman cry without wanting to cut off our right hands to help her.

She promptly began to cry again, and hid her face, which gave Jack courage. "Perhaps I could help, you know," he

went on. "I guess you're alone here, aren't you, except for your friend, Mrs. Fox-Leffingwell, and---'

"My friend!" Lady Pam echoed bitterly. And Jack caught at the cue.

"Well, you might let me be your friend, then. Girls always let us be their friends in our country. Has anybody been treating you badly? Because if they have-

"No," she broke in, with a little miserable, babyish gurgle. "I've been dreadfully foolish, and I've got to pay for it, that's all. Oh-oh, such a price!" "You sha'n't pay," exclaimed Jack,

almost fiercely.

She looked up surprised, her gray

eyes swimming.

"Oh, but I shall have to-somehow. It's a debt of honor." She would have snatched back her own impulsive answer if she could, but Adriance was too quick for her-and his mind leaped ahead of his words.

"Is it bridge?" he asked.

"You-you have no right-" she began miserably; but he cut her short. "I have a right, because you're a

young girl, and I'm a man, and can't stand by to see you-cheated."

"There's no question of cheating. But-oh, well, since you are so kind, and take an interest, I-I wonder if it would be very bad for me to talk to you about it, and ask your advice. You see, I've nobody else. And-and Americans are different, aren't they? I've always heard they are."

"Of course we are," said Jack stout-

ly. "Well, Mrs. Fox-Leffingwell has been teaching me to play bridge the last few days. I'd never played before. Mother hadn't cared for me to learn. And oh, I've lost such a lot of money! I didn't realize how much till to-day. And I thought, at least, she would give me time. There's a little jewelry I could sell. That would go toward it. And I might have saved it somehow. But she says debts like this must be paid at once, and she can't wait, because she is hard up. And if I don't pay she'll telegraph to my mother. Oh, it's all so dreadful! It's like a bad dream. But I can't wake up."

"It's only a bad dream, and you will wake up," said Jahis way. "Yousaid Jack, carefully feeling

"I shall wake to worse things."

"What do you mean?"

"Oh, I oughtn't to tell you, Butbut it's the only way out of it, and that seems the worst of all. I can't tell you what it is."

"You don't need to tell me," said Jack, with a sudden flash of enlightenment. "I see the whole game. It's Potterson. Potterson wants to pay for you."

"He wants to marry me," amended

Pamela, somewhat indignantly. "Of course. Who wouldn't? I

mean, the whole thing is a-what one calls a 'put up job.' They've arranged it between them, Mrs. Fox-Leffingwell and Potterson."

"Oh, how dreadful! If I thought so,

I-I'd run away from Mrs. Fox-Leffingwell this very minute. But-I'm afraid I oughtn't to be talking to you

of such things."

"I'm sure you ought: I shouldn't wonder if I'd been created for this very purpose, and nothing else. It would be quite worth while to have been born for it-if I can help you. And I know I can, if you'll be kind, and let me."

"Would you call that being kind? Only, I don't see how you could help

me.

"I do. Lots of ways."

"Oh, I hope you're not going to offer-I can't even say it. That would spoil everything in a moment."

"I know what you're thinking about, of course. No, I won't offer that.

There are other means.' "I can't see them. Everything is black before my eyes."

"Everything is red before mine when I think of-Potterson. You will trust me, and let me be your friend, won't you? You see, knowing people doesn't depend on how long ago you were introduced."

"No. I suppose not. I do trust you. There's something about you so—so dependable, I can't help it."

"Thank you. That's the best compliment I ever had. Now, will you answer me a few questions, and believe that I don't ask 'em because I'm curious or pushing, but because I want to know just how to work at—perhaps—blocking somebody's game?"

She nodded, smiling faintly. And her faintest smile had a hint of dimples

"Mrs. Fox-Leffingwell has thrown you a good deal with Sir Thomas. hasn't she?"

"Yes.

"She wanted to give him a chance

with you."

"Perhaps. She seems to like him. She was always saving nice things to me about him."

"And she was angry when you refused him?"

"Oh, how did you know he hadthat I---"

"I guessed."

"Well, she thought I was very stupid, and tried to persuade me, but I said I couldn't do it. I'd rather be a gov-

erness-or anything."

"Then he went away, as a part of the game, to make himself of more importance when he came back; and she picked up some people, and you played bridge. And Mrs. Fox-Leffingwell has let you in for a lot of money. And you don't see how you can pay; and now Sir Thomas has appeared, and proposed again, and-

"Yes. That's exactly how everything happened."

"Well, if you'll excuse my saying so, believe the whole business was planned, and Mrs. Fox-Leffingwell has been paid, and will be paid more if she can bring this thing off. I wouldn't shock you by making such an accusation against a person once a friend of yours if I didn't want you to see that these people aren't playing fair. They deserve anything. That's to begin with; what comes next is to get you out of the scrape."

'Oh, but how is it to be done, unless

I promise to mar——"

'Just sit tight and watch me do it all,

if you please, Lady Pamela.'

She asked no more questions, but dried her eyes, shook hands with her champion, and thought about him constantly. Though she obeyed his directions and watched, nothing much seemed to happen, except that the rumor began to run around the hotel that the young American who seemed so unassuming was a millionaire, after all. Pam wondered if the rumor were part of the plot; for he seemed much too nice to be a real millionaire.

But Mrs. Fox-Leffingwell remained blissfully ignorant that there was a plot; therefore she had no difficulty in believing the rumor; and decided though he was no longer wanted to take a hand at bridge-that she would not drop Mr. Adriance, after all; if he were rich, there was no knowing when he

might not be useful.

Therefore, when he proposed teaching her his national game of poker, she accepted with pretty enthusiasm. They played, and she was so lucky that she loved the game. She often held threes, flushes, and fours; when there was a jack-pot she was almost sure to win it.

But just at this point fortune turned, not a cold shoulder, but an uncompromising back. Before she knew "where she was," Mrs. Fox-Leffingwell owed Mr. Jack Adriance two hundred

pounds.

What to do she did not know. Pam had not yet been forced into accepting Sir Thomas Potterson, by way of paying her bridge debts-though her decision could not be postponed for longtherefore, until all was settled, the man would neither give more nor lend. He was hard as nails. So Mrs. Fox-Leffingwell laughed, and said to Jack Ad-"What a good thing for me that I was just learning-that we weren't playing for money!"

"But you took mine this afternoon,"

said he.

"That-that was different," Mrs. Leff brazened it out.

"I don't see it. I'm afraid you'll have to pay, Mrs. Fox-Leffingwell."

"What nonsense! I tell you we were playing for chips."

"Those chips may prove expensive."

"What do you mean?"

"I mean that if you don't pay me, I mean to make things disagreeable for you. I can, you know. In a few days I'm due at the Duke of Northmoorland's place, in Dumbartonshire-

"What, you know them?"

"The duke and duchess visited me at Newport."

"You wouldn't injure a woman?" "You don't mind injuring a young girl."

'Pam has-

"Told me nothing. I guessed. Tell her you were only joking about the money, send Sir Thomas Potterson about his business—you see, I've guessed that, too-and this evening's wiped off the slate. Otherwise-

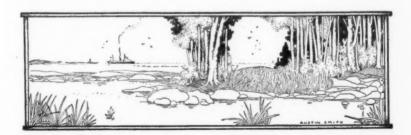
'You are cruel."

"Anyhow, I'm obstinate. The duchess hates-

"Oh, Pam shall know I was only joking.

In Mrs. Fox-Leffingwell's opinion, Tack Adriance was a blackmailer. In Lady Pamela Sylvain's, he was a knight of chivalry - almost uncomfortably chivalrous, indeed, for he did not propose until he was as certain as a man can ever be of such matters that there was no danger the girl would accept him out of sheer gratitude.

He was in doubt about this for so long that poor Pam grew pale and thin; for it was not until she had been at home with her mother some time that he dared to speak. But then it came right in the end, even with Lady Revel; for he did not need to play poker for a living. In spite of his youth, his good looks, and his good health, he was a real millionaire. His wife could play bridge for five guinea points and lose every day, if she liked; but for some reason or other Lady Pamela Adriance has never been fond of bridge.





CHAPTER I.

MR. NEVILL TYSON.



HERE were only two
or three houses in
Drayton Parva where
Mr. and Mrs. Nevill
Tyson were received.
A thrill of guilty expectation used to go
through the room when

they were announced, and people watched them with a fearful interest, as if they were the actors in some enthralling but forbidden drama.

Perhaps if she had been tried by a jury of her peers—but Mrs. Nevill Tyson had no peers in Drayton Parva. She was tried by an invisible and incorruptible jury of ideas in Miss Batchelor's head. Opinion sways all things in Drayton Parva, and Miss Batchelor swayed opinion.

As for Mr. Nevill Tyson, he had dropped into Leicestershire from Heaven knows where, and was understood to be more or less on his trial. Nobody knew anything about him, except that he was a nephew of old Tyson of Thorneytoft, and had come in for the property. Nobody cared much for old Tyson of Thorneytoft; he was not exactly-well, no matter, he was very respectable, and he was dead, which entitled him to a little consideration. And as Mr. Nevill Tyson was an unmarried man in those days he naturally attracted some attention on his own account, as well as for the sake of the very respectable old man, his uncle.

He was first seen at a dinner at the Morleys'. Somebody else happened to be the guest of the evening, and somebody else took Lady Morley into dinner. Tyson took Miss Batchelor; and I don't think he quite liked it. Miss Batchelor was clever-frightfully clever-but she never showed up well in public; she had a nervous manner, and a way of looking at you as if you were some curious animal that she would like to pat if she were perfectly sure you were not dangerous. And when you were about to take compassion on her shyness, she startled you with a sudden lapse into self-possession. I can see her now looking at Tyson over the frills on her shoulder, with her thin, crooked little mouth smiling slightly. might well look, for Nevill Tyson's appearance was remarkable. He might have been any age between twenty-five and forty; as a matter-of-fact, he was thirty-six. England had made him florid and Anglo-Saxon, but the tropics had bleached his skin and dried his straw-colored hair till it looked like hay. His figure was short and rather clumsily built, but it had a certain strength and determination; so had his face. The determination was not expressly stated by any single featurethe mouth was not what you would call firm, and the chin retreated ever so slightly in a heavy curve-but it was, somehow, implied by the whole. He gave you the idea of iron battered in all the arsenals of the world. Batchelor wondered what he would have to say for himself.

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He said very little, and looked at nobody, until some casual remark of his made somebody look at him. Then he began to talk, laconically at first, and finally with great fluency. It was all about himself, and everybody listened. He proved a good talker, as a man ought to be who has knocked about four continents and seen strange men and stranger women. You could tell that Miss Batchelor was interested, for she had turned round in her chair now and was looking him straight in the face. It seemed that he had worked his way out to Bombay and back again. He had been reporter to half a dozen provincial papers. He had been tutor to Somebody's son at some place not specified. He had tried his hand at comic journalism in London and at cattle-driving in Texas, and had been half-way to glory as a captain of irregulars in the Sudanese war. No, nobody was more surprised than himself when that mystic old man left him He thought he had Thorneytoft. chucked civilization for good. good? But-after his exciting lifewouldn't he find civilization a littledull? (Miss Batchelor had a way of pointing her sentences, as if she were speaking in parables.) Not in the country, there was hardly enough of it there, and he had never tried being a country gentleman before; he rather wanted to see what it was like. Wouldn't it be a little hard, if he had The first never? He thought not. thing he should do would be to get some decent hunters.

Hunters were all very well, but had he no hobbies? No, he had not; the bona-fide country gentleman never had hobbies. They were kept by amateur gentlemen retired from business to the suburbs. Here Sir Peter observed that, talking of hobbies, old Mr. Tyson had a perfect—er—mania for orchids; he spent the best part of his life in his greenhouse. Mr. Nevill Tyson thought he would rather spend his in Calcutta at

A dark, lean man who had arrived with Tyson was seen to smile frequently during the above dialogue. Miss Batchelor caught him doing it, and turned to Tyson. "Captain Stanistreet seemed rather amused at the notion of your being a fine old country gentleman."

"Stanistreet? I dare say. But he

knows nothing about it, I assure you. He has the soul of a cabman. He measures everything by its distance from Charing Cross."

"I see. And you—are all for green fields and idyllic simplicity?"

He bowed, as much as to say: "I am, if you say so."

Miss Batchelor became instantly selfpossessed.

"You won't like it. Nothing happens here; nothing ever will happen. You will be dreadfully bored."

"If I am bored I shall get something to do. I shall dissipate myself in a bland, parochial patriotism. I can feel it coming on already. When I once get my feet on a platform I shall let myself go."

"Do. You'll astonish our simple Arcadian farmers. Nothing but good old Tory melodrama goes down here. Are you equal to that?"

"Oh, yes. I'm terrific in Tory melodrama. I shall bring down the house." She turned a curious, scrutinizing

look on him.
"Yes," she said, "you'll bring down

the house—like Samson among the Philistines."

He returned her look with interest. "I should immensely like to know," said he, "what you go in for. I'm sure you go in for something."

She looked at her plate. "Well, I dabble a little in psychology."

"Oh!" There was a moment's silence. "Psychology is a large order," said Tyson presently.

"Yes, if you go in deep. I'm not deep. I'm perfectly happy when I've got hold of the first principles. It sounds dreadfully superficial, but I'm not interested in anything but principles."

"I'm sorry to hear it, for in that case you won't be interested in me."

She laughed nervously. She was accustomed to be rallied on her attainments, but never quite after this fashion

"Why not?"

"Because I haven't any principles."

She bent her brows; but her eyes were smiling under her frown.

"You really mustn't say these things here. We are so dreadfully literal. We might take you at your word."

Tyson smiled, showing his rather

prominent teeth unpleasantly.

"I wish," said she, "I knew what you think a country gentleman's duties are."

"Do you? They are three: To hunt hard; to shoot straight; and to go to church."

"I hope you will perform them-

all."

"I shall—all. No—on second thoughts, I draw the line at going to church. It's all very well if you've got a private chapel, or an easy chair in the chancel, or a family vault you can sit in. But I detest these modern arrangements; I object to be stuck in a tight position between two boards, with my feet in somebody else's hat, and somebody else's feet in mine, and to have people breathing down my collar, and hissing and yelling alternately in my ear."

Again Miss Batchelor drew her eyebrows together in a friendly frown of warning. She liked the cosmopolitan Tyson and his reckless speech, and she had her own reasons for wishing him to make a good impression. But her hints had roused in him the instinct of antagonism, and he went on more recklessly than before. "No; you are perfectly wrong. I'm not an interesting atheist. I have the most beautiful child-

like faith in---'

"The God who was clever enough to make Mr. Nevill Tyson?" said Miss Batchelor, very softly. She had felt the antagonism, and resented it.

At this point Sir Peter came down with one of those tremendous platitudes that roll conversation out flat. That was his notion of the duty of a host, to rush in and change the subject just when it was getting exciting. The old gentleman had destroyed many a promising topic in this way, under the impression that he was saving a situation.

"You'll be bored to death—I give you six months," were Miss Batchelor's parting words, murmured aside over

her shoulder.

On their way home Stanistreet congratulated Tyson.

"By Jove! you've fallen on your feet, Tyson. They tell me Miss Batchelor is interested in you."

"I am not interested in Miss Batch-

elor. Who is she?"

"She is only Miss Batchelor of Meriden Court—the richest land-owner in Leicestershire."

"Good heavens! Why doesn't some-

body marry her?"

"Miss Batchelor, they say, is much too clever for that."

"Is she?" And Tyson laughed, a little brutally.

Of course everybody called on the eccentric newcomer when they saw that the Morleys had taken him up. But before they had time to ask each other to meet him, Mr. Nevill Tyson had imported his own society from Putney or Bohemia, or some of those places.

That was his first mistake.

The next was his marriage. In fact, for a man in Tyson's insecure position, it was more than a mistake; it was madness. He ought to have married some powerful woman like Miss Batchelor; a woman with ideas and money and character, to say nothing of an inviolable social reputation. But men like Tyson never do what they ought. Miss Batchelor was clever, and he hated clever women. So he married Molly Wilcox. Molly Wilcox was nineteen; she had had no education, and, what was infinitely worse, she had a vulgar mother. And as Mr. Wilcox might be considered a negligible quantity, the chances were that she would take after her mother.

The mystery was how Tyson ever came to know those people. Mr. Wilcox was a student and an invalid; moreover, he was excessively morose. He would not have called; and even Mrs. Wilcox could hardly have called without him. Scandalmongers said that Tyson struck up an acquaintance with the girl and her mother in a railway carriage somewhere between Drayton and St. Pancras, and had called on the strength of it. It did great credit to his

imagination that he could see the makings of Mrs. Nevill Tyson in Molly Wilcox, dressed according to her mother's taste, with that hair of hers all curling into her eyes in front, and rumpled up anyhow behind. However, though I dare say his introduction was a little informal and obscure, there was every reason for the intimacy that followed. The Wilcoxes were unpopular; so, by this time, was Tyson. In cultivating him, Mrs. Wilcox felt that she was doing something particularly esoteric and rather daring. She had taken a line. She loved everything that was a little flagrant, a little out of the common, and a little dubious. To a lady with these tastes Tyson was a godsend; he more than satisfied her desire for magnificence and mystery. economical reasons, Mrs. Wilcox's body was compelled to live with Mr. Wilcox in a cottage in Drayton Parva; but her soul dwelt continually in a sidestreet in Bayswater, in a region haunted by the shabby-refined, the shabby-smart, and the innocently risky. Mrs. Wilcox, I maintain, was as innocent as the babe unborn. She believed that not only is this world the best of all possible worlds, but that Bayswater is the best of all possible places in it. So, though she was quite deaf to many of the chords in Tyson's being, her soul responded instantly to the note of "town." And when she discovered that Tyson had met and, what is more, dined with her old friends, the Blundell-Thompsons "of Bombay," her satisfaction knew no bounds.

At any rate, Tyson had not been very long at Thorneytoft before Mrs. Wilcox found herself arguing with Mr. Wilcox. She herself was impervious to argument, and, owing to her rapt inconsequence, it was generally difficult to tell what she would be at. This time, however, she seemed to be defending Mr. Nevill Tyson from unkind aspersions.

"Of course, all young men are likely to be wild; but Mr. Tyson is not a young man."

"Therefore Mr. Tyson is not likely to be wild. Do you know you are guilty of the fallacy known to logicians as illicit process of the major?"

Mrs. Wilcox looked up in some alarm. The term suggested anything from a court-martial to some vague impropriety.

"The major? Major who?" she inquired, deftly recovering her mental

"Somewhere about the premises, I-fancy," said Mr. Wilcox dryly. When all argument failed, he had still a chastened delight in mystifying the poor lady.

Mrs. Wilcox looked out of the window. "Oh, I see; you mean Captain Stanistreet." She smiled; for where Captain Stanistreet was Mr. Nevill Tyson was not very far away. Moreover, she was glad that she had on her nice ultramarine tea-gown, with the green moiré front. (They were wearing those colors in town that season.)

At Thorneytoft a few hours later Stanistreet's tongue was running on as usual, when Tyson pulled him up with a jerk. "Hold hard. Do you know you're talking about the future Mrs. Nevill Tyson?"

Stanistreet tried to keep calm, for he was poised on his waist across the edge of the billiard-table. As it was, he lost his balance at the critical moment, and it ruined his stroke. He looked at the cloth, then at his cue, with the puzzled air which people generally affect in these circumstances.

"Great Scott!" said he, "how did I manage that?"

The explanation may or may not have referred to the stroke.

Tyson looked at his friend with a smile which suggested that he expected adverse criticism, and was prepared to deal temperately with it.

"Why not?" said he.

Stanistreet, however, said nothing. He was absorbed in chalking the end of his cue. His silence gave Tyson no chance; it left too much to the imagination.

"Have you any objection?"

"Well, isn't the lady a little young for a fine old country gentleman like yourself?" Tyson's small blue eyes twinkled, for he prided himself on being able to take a joke at his own expense. Still, it was not exactly kind of Stanistreet to remind him of his mushroom growth.

"Come," said Stanistreet, "you are a gentleman, you know. At any rate, you're about the only fellow in these parts who can stand a frock coat and topper—that's the test. I saw Morley, your big man, going into church yesterday, and he looked as if he'd just sneaked out of the city on a bus. But you always knew how to dress yourself. The instinct is hereditary."

Louis had just made a brilliant series of cannons, and was marking fifty to his score. If he had not been so absorbed in his game, he would have seen that Tyson was angry; and Tyson when he was angry was not at all nice to see.

He made himself very stiff as he answered: "Whether I'm a gentleman or not I can't say. It's an abstruse question. But I've got the girl on my side, which is a point in my favor; I have the weighty support of my mama-in-law elect; and—the prejudices of papa I shall subdue by degrees."

"By degrees?" What degrees?" Again the question was unkind. It referred to a phase of Tyson's university career which he least liked to look back

upon.

"And how about Mrs. Hathaway?"

"Damn Mrs. Hathaway," said Tyson. "Poor lady, isn't she sufficiently

damned already?"

The twinkle came back into Tyson's eyes, but there was gloom in the rest of his face. The twinkle was lost upon Stanistreet. He knew too much; and the awkward thing was that Tyson never could tell exactly how much he knew. So he wisely dropped the subject.

Stanistreet certainly knew a great deal; but he was the last man in the world to make a pedantic display of his knowledge; and Mr. Wilcox's prejudices remained the only obstacle to Tyson's marriage. It was one iron will against another, and the battle was long. Mr. Wilcox had the advantage of position. He simply retreated into his li-

brary as into a fortified camp, entrenching himself behind a barricade of books, and refusing to skirmish with the enemy in the open. And to every assault made by his family he replied with a violent fit of coughing. A well-authenticated lung-disease is a formidable weapon in domestic warfare.

At last he yielded. Not to time, nor yet to Tyson, nor yet to his wife's logic, but to the importunities of his lung-disease. Other causes may have contributed; he was a man of obstinate affections, and he had loved his daughter.

It was considered right that the faults of the dead—his unreasonable obstinacy, for instance—should be forgiven and forgotten. Death seemed to have made Mrs. Wilcox suddenly familiar with her incomprehensible husband. She was convinced that whatever he had thought of it on earth, in heaven, purged from all mortal weakness, Mr. Wilcox was taking a very different view of Molly's engagement.

He died in March, and Tyson married Molly in the following May. The bride is reported to have summed up the case thus: "Bad? I dare say he is. I'm not marrying him because he is good; I'm marrying him because he's delightful. And I'm every bit as bad as

he is, if they only knew."

It was Mrs. Nevill Tyson's genius for this sort of remark that helped to make her reputation later on.

CHAPTER II.

MRS. NEVILL TYSON.

Tyson took his wife abroad for six months to finish her education—as if to be Tyson's wife was not education enough for any woman!—and Drayton Parva forgot about them for a time.

In fact, nobody had fully realized the existence of Molly Wilcox till she burst on them as Mrs. Nevill Tyson.

It was the first appearance of the bride and bridegroom on their return from their long honeymoon. The rector was giving an "at home"—tentatively—in their honor; and a great many people had accepted, feeling that

a very interesting social experiment was about to be made. Everybody remembers how Mrs. Nevill Tyson fluttered down into that party of thirty women to eleven men in an absurd frock, and with a still more absurd air of assured welcome. Poor little woman! Her comings and goings from one continental watering-place to another had been the progress of a triumphant divinity; where she found a hotel she left a temple. I sometimes think, too, that little look of expectant gladness may have been due to the feeling that the rectory was in England, and England was home. She was dressed in the most perfect Parisian fashion, from the crown of her fur toque to the tips of her little shoes; but she had never learned to speak three words of French correctly. She informed everybody of the fact that afternoon, laughing with the keenest enjoyment of her remarkable stupidity; it seemed that her rôle was to be remarkable in everything. However that may have been, in less than half an hour seven out of those eleven men were gathered round her chair in the corner; two out of the seven were the rector and Sir Peter Morley, and Mrs. Nevill Tyson was talking to all of them at once.

Mrs. Nevill Tyson-she was an illusion and a distraction from head to foot; her beauty made a promise to the senses and broke it to the intellect. Coil upon coil, and curl upon curl, of dark hair, the dark eyes of some ruminant animal, a little, frivolous curve in an intelligent nose, a lower jaw like a boy's, the full white throat of a woman, and the mouth and cheeks of a child just waked from sleep. Tyson had escaped one misfortune that had been prophesied for him. His wife was not She sat at her ease-much vulgar. more at her ease than Miss Batchelorand chattered away about her honeymoon, her bad French, the places she had been to, the people she had seen, and all without any consciousness of her delightful self. Now it was a continuous stream of minute talk, growing shallower and shallower as it spread over a larger surface; and now her mind had hardly settled on its subject before it was off and away again like a butterfly. There was one advantage in this excessive lightness of touch, that it left great things as it found them; for great things lay lightly on her soul. She told everybody she had been to Rome: but imagination simply refused to picture Mrs. Nevill Tyson in Rome. Her presence in the Eternal City seemed something less than her footprint in its dust or her shadow on its walls. Nothing is more irritating than to have your dream of a place destroyed by the light-hearted gabble of some idiot who has seen it; but Mrs. Nevill Tyson spared your dreams. The most delicate ideal would have been undisturbed by the soft sweep of her generalities, or the graceful flight of her fancy from the matter in hand.

"There are a great many beautiful statues in the Vatican," said Sir Peter

in his dream.

"Oh, no end. And, talking of beautiful statues, we were introduced to the most beautiful woman in Rome, the Countess—Countess—Nevill. what was that woman's name? Oh-I forget her name, but she was the loveliest woman I ever saw in my life. Everybody was in love with herdown on their knees groveling, you couldn't help it. Fancy, she was engaged to ten people at once! I suppose she had ten engagement-ringsone for each finger, one for each man. I should never have known which was which. But oh! I oughtn't to have told you. My husband said I wasn't to talk about her. I don't see why-everybody was talking about her!"

There was a chorus of protestation. "And why shouldn't they talk about her, and why shouldn't she be engaged to ten gentlemen at once? The more

the merrier."

"And you haven't told us the lady's name, so we're none the wiser."

"I forgot it. But it would have been all the same if I hadn't. I never can remember not to tell things. Oh—Countess—Poli—Polidori! There—you see. My husband says I'm the soul of indiscretion."

There was a sudden silence. Mrs. Nevill Tyson's last sentence seemed to detach itself and float about the room, and Miss Batchelor perceived with a pang of pleasure that if Tyson's wife was not vulgar she was an arrant fool.

"I suppose you visited all the great cathedrals?" said the rector. Perhaps he wished to change the subject; perhaps he felt that by talking about cathedrals to Mrs. Nevill Tyson he was giving a serious, not to say sacerdotal, character to a frivolous occupation.

"Well, only St. Peter's and the one at

Milan.'

"And which did you prefer? I am told that St. Peter's is very like our own St. Paul's—or I should say St. Paul's—"

"Oh, please don't ask me! I know no more than the man in the moon—I mean the man in the honeymoon"—that joke was Tyson's—"and a lot he knows about it. There's the man in the honeymoon," she explained, nodding merrily in her husband's direction.

Meanwhile Tyson was making himself agreeable to Miss Batchelor. And

this is how he did it.

"I hear, Miss Batchelor, that you are

a lady of genius.'

There was a rumor that Miss Batchelor was engaged on a work of fiction, which indeed may have been true, though not exactly in the sense intended.

"Indeed! Who told you that?"

"Scandal. But I never listen to scandal, and I didn't believe it."

"I don't suppose you believe that a

woman could be a genius."

"No? I have seen women who were geniuses, before now; but in every instance it meant—I shall hurt your feelings if I tell you what it meant."

"Not at all. I have no feelings."
"It meant either deviltry or disease."

Tyson's eyes twinkled wickedly as he stroked his blond mustache. He felt a diabolical delight in teasing Miss Batchelor. There was a time when Miss Batchelor had admired Tyson. He was not handsome; but his face had character, and she liked character. Now she hated him and his face and every-

thing belonging to him, his wife included. But there was no denying that he was clever, cleverer than any man

she had ever met in her life.

"Even a great intellect"—here Tyson looked hard at Miss Batchelor, and her faded, nervous face seemed to shrink under the look—"is a great misfortune—to a woman. Look at my wife, now. She has about as much intellect as a guinea-pig, and the consequence is she is not only happy herself, but a cause of happiness to others. There—see!"

Miss Batchelor saw. She saw Sir Peter Morley contending with the rector for the honor of handing Mrs. Nevill Tyson her tea. They were joined by Stanistreet. Yes, Stanistreet. The rector seemed to have drawn the line nowhere that day. There was no mistaking the tall figure, alert and vigorous, the lean dark face, a little eager, a little hard. And that very clever woman, Miss Batchelor, sat hungry and thirsty -very hungry and very thirsty-and Tyson stood behind her stroking his mustache. He was not looking at her now, nor thinking of her. He was contemplating that adorable piece of folly, his wife.

CHAPTER III.

MR, AND MRS. NEVILL TYSON AT HOME.

Perhaps it was as well that Mrs. Nevill Tyson took things so lightly, otherwise she might have been somewhat oppressed by her surroundings at Thor-That hideous old barrack nevtoft. stared with all the uncompromising truculence of bare white stone on nature that smiled agreeably round it in lawn and underwood. Old Tyson had bought the house as it stood from an impecunious nobleman, supplying its deficiencies according to his own very respectable fancy. The result was a little startling. Worm-eaten oak was flanked by mahogany veneer, brocade and tapestry were eked out with horsehair and green rep, gules and azure from the stained-glass lozenge lattices were reflected in a hundred twinkling, dangling lusters; and you came upon lions rampant in a wilderness of wax flowers. What with antique heraldry and utilitarian furniture, you would have said there was no place there for anything so frivolously pretty as Mrs. Nevill Tyson; unless, indeed, her figure served to give the finishing touch to the

ridiculous medley.

The sight of Thornevtoft would have taken the heart out of Mrs. Wilcox if anything could. Mrs. Wilcox herself looked remarkably crisp and fresh and cheerful in her widow's dress. Tyson rather liked Mrs. Wilcox than otherwise (perhaps because she was a little afraid of him and showed it); he noticed with relief that his mother-inlaw was beginning to look almost like a lady, and he attributed this pleasing effect to the fact that she was now unable to commit any of her former atrocities of color. He respected her, too, for wearing her weeds with an air of genial worldliness. There was something about Mrs. Wilcox that evaded the touch of sorrow; but from certain things-food, clothes, furniture-she seemed to catch, as it were, the sense of tears, suggestions of the human tragedy. She was peculiarly sensitive to interiors, and a drawing-room "without any of the little refinements and luxuries, you know-not so much as a flower-pot or a basket-table"—weighed heavily on her happy soul. Needless to say, she had never dreamed that Nevill would let the house remain in its present state; her intellect could never have grasped so melancholy a possibility, and the fact was somewhat unsettling to her faith in Nevill Tyson. "Isn't it—for a young bride, you know—just a little-a little triste?" And being more than a little afraid of her son-inlaw, she waved her hands to give an inoffensive vagueness to her idea. Tyson said he didn't care to spend money on a place like Thorneytoft; he didn't know how long he would stay in it; he never stayed anywhere long; he was a pilgrim and a stranger, a sort of cosmopolitan Cain, and he might go abroad again, or he might take a flat in town for the season. And at the mention of a flat in town all Mrs. Wilcox's beautiful beliefs came back to her unimpaired. A flat in town, and a house in the country that you can afford to look down upon—what more could you desire?

Mrs. Nevill Tyson did not take the furniture very seriously. For quite three days after her arrival she was content to sit in that very respectable drawing-room, waiting for the callers who never came. She could not have taken the callers very seriously, either -what did Mrs. Nevill Tyson take seriously, I should like to know?-or else, surely, she would have had some little regard for appearances; she would never have risked being caught at four o'clock in the afternoon sitting on Tyson's knee, doing all sorts of absurd things to his face. First she stroked his hair straight down over his forehead, which had a singularly brutalizing effect, so that she was obliged to push it back again and make it all neat with one of the little tortoise-shell combs that kept her own curls in order. Then she lifted up his mustache till the lip curled in a dreadful mechanical smile, showing a slightly crooked, slightly prominent tooth.

"Oh, what an ugly tooth!" said Mrs. Nevill Tyson; and she let the lip fall again like a curtain. "How could I marry a man with a tooth like that? Do you know, poor papa used to say you were just like Phorc—Phorc—

something with a fork in it?"

"Phorcyas?"

"Yes, How clever you are! Who was Phore-y-as?" Mrs. Nevill Tyson made a face over the word.

"It's another name for Mephistopheles." Tyson knew his Goethe better

than his classics.

"And Mephistopheles is another name for—the devil! Oh!" She took the tips of his ears with the tips of her fingers and held his head straight while she stared into his eyes. "Look me straight in the face, now. No blinking. Are you the devil, I wonder?" She put her head on one side as if she were considering him judicially from an entirely new point of view. "I wonder why papa didn't like you?"

"He didn't think me good enough for his little girl, and he was quite

right there.

"He didn't mind so much when I got engaged to Willie Payne. He said we were admirably suited to each other. That was because Willie was a fool. Oh—I forgot you didn't know!"

"Ah! I know now, And how many

more, Mrs. Molly?"

"No more-only you. And Willie doesn't count. It was ages ago, when I was at school. Look here.' She pushed back the ruffles of her sleeve and showed him a little livid mark running across the back of her hand. "Did I ever tell you what that meant? It means that they shoved Willie's letters into the big fireplace-with the tongsand that I stuck my hand between the bars and pulled them out.'

"I say-you must have been rather

gone on Willie, you know."

"No. I didn't like him much. But I loved his letters." Mrs. Nevill Tyson looked at the tips of her little shoes, and Mr. Nevill Tyson looked at her.

"So Willie doesn't count, doesn't he?" "No. He was a fool. He never did anything. Nevill, what did father think you'd done?"

"I really cannot say. Nothing to deserve you, I suppose."

"Rubbish! I know all that. But he said there was something, and he wouldn't tell me what. Anyhow, you didn't do it, did you?"

"Probably not."

"Come, I think you might tell me, when I've confessed all my little sins to you." Mrs. Nevill Tyson was persistent, not because she in the least wanted to know, but because nobody likes being beaten.

"I don't know what the dear old pater was driving at. I don't suppose he knew himself. He was a scholar, not a man of the world. He could read any Greek poet, I dare say, who was dead enough and dull enough; but when a real live Englishman walked into his study, it seemed to put him out, somehow. He didn't like me, and he showed it. All the same, I think I could have made him like me if he'd given me a chance. I don't suppose he does me any injustice now.'

"No. He knew an awful lot about those stupid old Greeks and Romans and people, but I don't think he knew much about you. I expect he made it up to frighten mother. That reminds me, what do you think Miss Batchelor says about you? She told mother that it was a pity you hadn't any profession-every man ought to have a profession-keep you out of mischief. I wasn't going to have her talking like that about my husband—the impudent thing !- so I just stopped her yesterday in Moxon's shop and told her you had a profession. I led up to it so neatly. you can't think, I said you were going to be a barrister or a judge or some-

"A judge? That's rather a large order. But you know you mustn't tell stories, you little minx. Miss Batchelor's too clever to take all that in."

"Well, but it's true. You are going to be a barrister, and everybody knows that barristers grow into judges, if you feed them properly."

"But I haven't the remotest intention of being a barrister. How did you get hold of that notion?".

thing.

"Oh! I knew it all along. Papa said so."

"You must have been mistaken." "Not a bit. I'll tell you exactly what he said. I heard him talking about it to mother in the library. I wasn't listening, you know. I-I heard your name, and I couldn't help it. He said he expected to see you figuring in the law courts some of these days-Probate, Divorce, and Admiralty Division."

Tyson rose, putting her down from his knee as if she had been a baby.

"I hope you didn't tell Miss Batchelor that?'

"Yes, I did, though-rather!"

He smiled in spite of himself. "What did she do?"

"Oh! she just stared-over her shoul-

der; you know her way."

"Look here, Molly, you must not go about saying that sort of thing. People here don't understand it; they'll only think"What?"

"Never mind what they'll think. The world is chock-full of wickedness, my child. But if half the people you meet are sinners, the other half are fools. I never knew any one yet who wasn't one or the other. So don't think about what they think, but mind what you say. See?"

"I'm sorry," She had come softly up to the window where he stood; and now she was rubbing his sleeve with one side of her face and smiling with the other.

He stroked her hair.

"All right. Don't do it again, that's

all."

"I won't-if you'll only tell me one thing. Were you ever engaged to any-body but me?"

"No; I was never engaged to any-

body but you."

"Then you were never in love with ten gentlemen at once, like the Countess Pol-

His answer was cut short by the entrance of Sir Peter Morley, followed by Captain Stanistreet.

CHAPTER IV.

THE FIRST STONE.

Tyson was much flattered by the rumor that Sir Peter Morley had pronounced his wife to be "the loveliest woman in Leicestershire"; for Lady Morley herself was a sufficiently splendid type, with her austere Puritan beauty. As for the rector, it was considered that his admiration of Mrs. Nevill Tyson somewhat stultified his utterances in the pulpit.

It is not always well for a woman when the judgment of the other sex reverses that of her own. It was not well for Mrs. Nevill Tyson to be told that she had fascinated Sir Peter Morlev and spoiled the rector's sermons; it was not well for her to be worshiped -collectively - by the riffraff that swarmed about Thorneytoft at Tyson's invitation; but any of these things were better than for her to be left, as she frequently was, to the unmixed society of Captain Stanistreet. He had a reputation. Tyson thought nothing of going up to town for the week-end and leaving Louis to entertain his wife in his absence. To do him justice, this neglect was at first merely a device by which he heightened the luxury of possession. In his own choice phrase, he "liked to give a mare a doose rein when he knew her paces." It was all right. He knew Molly, and if he did not, Stanistreet knew him. But these things were subtleties which Drayton Parva did not understand, and, naturally enough, it began to avoid the Tysons

because of them.

Apparently Mrs. Nevill Tyson liked Stanistreet. She liked his humorous dark face and his courteous manners; above all, she liked that air of profound interest with which he listened to everything that she had to say; it made it easy for her to chatter to him as she chattered to nobody else, except-presumably-her husband. As for Stanistreet, try as he would-and he tried a great deal-he could not make Mrs. Nevill Tyson out. Day after day Mrs. Nevill Tyson, in amazing garments, sat and prattled to him in the dog-cart, while Tyson followed the hounds; yet for the life of him he could not tell whether she was really very infantile or only very deep. You see, she was Tyson's wife. It must be said she gave him every opportunity for clearing his ideas on the subject, and if he did not know, other people might be allowed to make mistakes. And when he came to stay at Thorneytoft for weeks at a time, familiarity with the little creature's moods only complicated the problem.

It was about the middle of February, and Stanistreet had been down for a fortnight's hunting, when, in the morning of his last day, Tyson announced his intention of going up to town with him to-morrow. He might be away for three weeks or a month altogether; it depended upon whether he enjoyed himself sufficiently.

Stanistreet, who was looking at Mrs. Nevill Tyson at the time, saw the smile and the color die out of her face; her beauty seemed to suffer a shade, a momentary eclipse. She began to drink tea-they were at breakfast-with an air of abstraction too precipitate to be quite convincing.

"Moll," said Tyson, "if you're going to this meet, you'd better run up-stairs

and put your things on."

"I don't want to go to any meets."

"Why not?"

"Because-I-I don't like to see oth-

er women riding.'

"Bless her little heart!"-Tyson was particularly affectionate this morning -"she's never had a bridle in her ridiculous hands, and she talks about 'other women riding.' "

"Because I want to ride, and you

won't let me, and I'm jealous."

"Well, if you mayn't ride with me, you may drive with Stanistreet."

"I may drive Captain Stanistreet?" "Certainly not: Captain Stanistreet

may drive you."

"We'll see about that," said Mrs. Nevill Tyson, as she left the room. She soon reappeared, enchantingly

pretty again in her laces and furs.

It was a glorious morning, the first thin white frost after a long thaw. The meet was in front of the crossroads inn, about a mile out of Drayton Parva. It was neutral ground, where Farmer Ashby could hold his own with Sir Peter any day, and speech was unfettered. Somebody remarked that Mrs. Nevill Tyson looked uncommonly happy in the dog-cart; while Tyson spoke to nobody and nobody spoke to him. Poor devil! he hadn't at all a pretty look on that queer bleached face of his. And all the time he kept twisting his horse's head round in a melancholy sort of way, and backing into things and out of them, fit to make you swear.

She must have noticed something. They were trotting along, Stanistreet driving, by a road that ran side by side with the fields scoured by the hunt, and Tyson could always be seen going recklessly and alone. He could ride, he could ride! His worst enemy never

doubted that.

"It's very odd," said she, "but thepeople here don't seem to like Nevill

one bit. I suppose they've never seen anything quite like him before."

"I very much doubt if they have." "I think they're afraid of him. Mother is, I know; she blinks when she talks to him."

"Does she blink when she talks to

"Of course not-you're different." "I am not her son-in-law, certainly."

"Do you know, though he's so much older than me-I simply shudder when I think he's thirty-seven-and so awfully clever, and so bad-tempered, I'm not in the least afraid of him. And he really has a shocking bad temper."

"I know it of old.

"So many nice people have bad tempers. I think it's the least horrid fault you can have; because it comes on you when you're not thinking, and it isn't your fault at all."

"No: it is generally some one else's." "I don't think much of people's passions myself. He might have some-

thing far worse than that."

"Most undoubtedly. He might have atrocious taste in dress, or a tendency to drink."

"Don't be silly. Did you know him when he was young? I don't mean to say he isn't young — thirty-seven's young enough for anybody—I mean when he was young like me?"

"I can't say. I doubt if he was ever young—like you. But I knew him when

he was a boy."

"So you understand him?"

"Oh! pretty well. Not always, perhaps. He's a difficult subject."

"Anyhow, you like him? Don't

Stanistreet gave a curious, hard

"Oh, yes-I like him."

"That's all right. And, really, I don't wonder that people can't make him out. He's the strangest animal I ever met in my life. I haven't made him out yet. I think I shall give him

"Give him up, by all means. Isn't that what people generally do when they can't understand each other?"

Mrs. Nevill Tyson made no answer.

She was trying to think, and thinking came hard to Mrs. Nevill Tyson.

"I suppose he's had a past. But, of course, it doesn't do to go poking and probing into a man's past—"

Stanistreet lifted his eyebrows and looked at the little woman. She was sitting bolt upright, staring out over the vague fields; she seemed to have uttered the words unconsciously, as if at the dictation of some familiar spirit. "And yet I wish—no, I don't wish I knew. I know he must have had an awful time of it." She turned her face suddenly on Stanistreet. "What do you think he told me the other day? He said he had never known anybody who wasn't either a fool or a sinner. What do you think of that? Must you be one or the other?"

Stanistreet shrugged his shoulders. "You may be both. We are all of us sinners, and certainly a great many of us are fools."

"I wonder. He isn't a fool."

Stanistreet wondered, too. He wondered at the things she allowed herself to say; he wondered whether she was drawing any inference; and, above all, he wondered at the shrinking, introspective look on her careless face.

In another minute Mrs. Nevill Tyson had started from her seat and was waving her muff wildly in the air. "Look—there he goes! Oh! did you see him take that fence? What an insane thing to do with the ground like that!"

He looked in the direction indicated by the muff, and saw Tyson riding far ahead of the hunt, a small scarlet blot on the gray-white landscape.

"By Jove! he rides as if he were charging the enemy's guns at the head of a line of cavalry."

"Yes." She leaned back; the excitement faded from her face, and she sighed. The sigh was so light that it scarcely troubled the frosty air, but it made Stanistreet look at her again. How adorably pretty she was in all her moods!

Perhaps she was conscious of the look, for she rattled on again more incoherently than before. "I'm talking a

great deal of nonsense; I always do when I get the chance. You can't talk nonsense to mother; she wouldn't understand it. She'd think it was sense. And, you see, I'm interested in my husband. I suppose it's the proper thing to take an interest in your husband. If you won't take an interest in your husband, what will you take an interest in? It's natural-not to say primitive. Do you know, he says I'm the most primitive person he ever came across. Should you say I was primitive? Don't answer that. I don't think he'd like me to talk about him quite so much. He thinks I never know where to draw the line. But I never see any lines to draw. and if I did, I wouldn't know how to draw them."

Stanistreet smiled grimly. He was wondering whether she was "primi-

"Just look at Scarum's ears! Don't tease her. She doesn't like it. Dear thing! She's delicious to kiss—she's got such a soft nose. But she'll bolt as soon as look at you, and she's awfully, hard to hold." Her fingers were twitching with the desire to drive Scarum.

"I think I can manage her."

"You see, somehow or other, I like talking to you. You may be a sinner, but I don't think you're a fool; and I've a sort of a notion that you understand."

He was silent. So many women had thought he understood!

"I wonder—do you understand?"
The eyes that Mrs. Nevill Tyson turned on Stanistreet were not searchlights; they were wells of darkness, unsearchable, unfathomable.

Something in Stanistreet, equally inscrutable, something that was himself and not himself, answered very low to that vague appeal.

"Yes, I understand."

He had turned toward her, smiling darkly, and all her face flashed back a happy smile.

Surely, oh, surely, Mrs. Nevill Tyson was the soul of indiscretion; for at that moment Miss Batchelor, trotting past with Lady Morley, looked from them to her companion and smiled, too.

That smile was the first stone.

Miss Batchelor acknowledged them with a curt little nod, and Mrs. Nevill Tyson's face became instantly over-clouded. Louis leaned a little nearer and said in a husky, uneven voice: "Surely you don't mind that impertinent woman?"

"Not a bit," said Mrs. Nevill Tyson. "She's got a villainous seat."

"Then what are you thinking about?"
"I'm thinking what horrid hard lines it is that they won't let me hunt. All the time I might have been flying across country with Nevill, instead of——"

"Instead of crawling in a dog-cart with me. Thank you, Mrs. Nevill."

"You needn't thank me. I haven't

given you anything."

Again Stanistreet wondered whether Mrs. Nevill was very simple or very profound. And wondering, he gave the mare a cut across the flanks that made her leap in the shafts.

"That was silly of you. She'll have her heels through before you know where you are. She's a demon to kick,

is Scarum."

Scarum had spared the splash-board this time, but she was going furiously, and the little dog-cart rocked from side to side. Mrs. Nevill Tyson rose to her feet.

"Strikes me you can't drive a little

bit," said she.

"Please sit down, Mrs. Tyson." But Mrs. Tyson remained imperiously standing, trying to keep her balance like a small sailor in a rollicking sea.

"Get up."

Stanistreet muttered wrathfully under his mustache, and she caught the words "damned foolery."

"Bundle out this minute." She made a grab at the rail in an undignified man-

ner.

He doubled the reins firmly over his right hand, and with his left arm he forced her back into her seat. He was holding her there when Farmer Ashby turned out of a by-lane and followed close behind them. And Farmer Ashby had a nice tale to tell at "The Crossroads" of how he had seen the captain

driving with his arm round Mrs. Ty-son's waist.

That was another stone.

Stanistreet tugged at the reins with both hands and pulled the mare almost onto her haunches; her hoofs shrieked on the iron road; she stood still and snorted, her forelegs well out, her hide smoking.

When he had made quite sure that the animal's attitude was that of temporary exhaustion rather than of passion, Stanistreet changed seats, and gave the reins to Mrs. Nevill Tyson; and Scarum burst into her second heat.

"I suppose you have a right to drive your own animal into the ditch," said he.

Mrs. Nevill Tyson set her teeth with a determined air, planted her feet firmly on the floor of the trap to give herself a good purchase; she gave the reins a little twist as she had seen Stanistreet do, she balanced the whip like a fishing-rod, with the line dangling over Scarum's ears, and then she rattled away over the wrinkling roads at a glorious pace; she reeled over cart-ruts, she went thump over sods and bump over mud-heaps, she grazed walls and hedges, skimmed over the brink of ditches, careened round corners, and tore past most things on the wrong side; and Stanistreet's sense of deadly peril was lost in the pleasure of seeing her do it. When she was not chattering to him she was encouraging Scarum with all sorts of endearments, small chirping sounds and delicate chuckles, smiling that indefinably malicious, lopsided smile which Stanistreet had been taught all his life to interpret as a challenge. Now they were going down a lane of beeches, they bent their heads under the branches, and a shower of rime fell about her shoulders, powdering her black hair; he watched it thawing in the warmth there till it sparkled like a fine dew; and now they were running between low hedges, and the keen air from the frosted fields smote the blood into her cheeks and the liquid light into her eves; it lifted the fringe from her forehead and crisped it over the fur border of her hat: flying ends of lace and sable were flung behind her like streamers; she seemed to be winged with the wind of speed; she was the embodiment of vivid, reck-

less, beautiful life.

It came over him with a sort of shock that this woman was Tyson's wife, irrevocably, until one or other of them died. And Tyson was not the sort of man to die for anybody's convenience but his own.

At last they swayed into the court-yard at Thorneytoft. "Thank Heaven we're alive!" he said, as he followed her

into the house.

Mrs. Nevill Tyson turned on the threshold. "Do you mean to say you didn't enjoy it?"

"Oh! of course it was delightful; but I don't know that it was exactlysafe."

"I see-you were afraid. We were safe enough so long as I was driving."

He smiled drearily. He felt that he had been whirled along in a delirious dream-a madman driven by a fool. As if in answer to his thoughts, she called back over the banisters:

"I'm not such a fool as I look, you

know."

No. for the life of him Stanistreet did not know. His doubt was absurd. for it implied that Mrs. Nevill Tyson practised the art of symbolism, and he could hardly suppose her to be so well acquainted with the resources of language. On the other hand, he could not conceive how, after living more than half a year with Tyson, she had preserved her formidable naiveté.

At dinner that evening, she still further obscured the question by boasting that she had saved Captain Stanistreet's

life. Stanistreet protested.

"You know "Nonsense!" said she. perfectly well that you'd have upset the whole show if you'd been left to yourself."

Tyson stared at his wife. "Do you mean to say that he let you drive?"

"Let me? Not he! He couldn't help it." Her white throat shook with derisive laughter. "I took the reins; or, if you like, I kicked over the traces. I always told you I'd do it some day."

Tyson pushed his chair back from the table and scowled meditatively. Mrs. Nevill Tyson was smiling softly to herself as she played with the water in her finger-glass. Presently she rose and shook the drops from her fingertips, like one washing her hands of a light matter. Stanistreet got up and opened the door for her, standing very straight and militant and grim; and as she passed through she looked back at him and laughed again.

"I can see," said Tyson, as Stanistreet took his seat again, "you've been letting that wife of mine make more or less of a fool of herself. If you had no consideration for her neck or your own, you might have thought of my son

and heir.

"Oh!" said Stanistreet, a little vaguely, for he was startled, "I kept a good lookout."

"Not much use in that," said Ty-

Stanistreet battled with his doubt. Tyson had furnished him with a key to his wife's moods. Moreover, a simpler explanation had occurred to him. Mrs. Nevill Tyson was fond of driving; she had been forbidden to drive, therefore she drove; she had never driven any animal in her life before, and, notwithstanding her inexperience, she had accomplished the dangerous feat without injury to anybody. Hence no doubt

her laughter and her triumph. But this again was symbolism. He

determined to sleep on it.

CHAPTER V.

THE NIGHT-WATCH.

Like all delightful things, Mrs. Nevill Tyson's laughter was short-lived. When Tyson went up to bed that night between twelve and one, he found his wife sitting by her bedroom fire in the Evidently contemplahalf-darkness. tion had overtaken her in the act of undressing, for her hair was still untouched, her silk bodice lav beside her on the floor where she had let it fall. and she sat robed in her long dressinggown. He came up to her, holding his

candle so that the light fell full on her face; it looked strange and pale against the vivid scarlet of her gown. eyes, too, were dim, her mouth had lost its delicate outline, her cheeks seemed to have grown slightly, ever so slightly, fuller, and the skin looked glazed as if by the courses of many tears. He had noticed these changes before; of late they had come many times in the twelve hours; but to-night it seemed not so much a momentary disfigurement as a sudden precocious maturity, as if nature had stamped her face with the image of what it would be ten, fifteen years hence. And as he looked at her a cold and subtle pang went through him, a curious abominable sensation, mingled with a sort of spiritual pain. He dared not give a name to the one feeling, but the other he easily recognized as selfreproach. He had known it once or twice before.

He stooped over her and kissed her. "Why are you sitting up here and cry-

ing, all by your little self?"

She shook her head. "What are you crying about? You didn't suppose I was angry with you?"

I wouldn't have cried if you had been angry. I'm not crying now. I don't know why I cried at all. I'm tired, or cold, or something."

"Why don't you go to bed, then?" "I'm going." She rose wearily and to the dressing-table. watched her reflection in the lookingglass. As she raised her arms to take the pins from her hair, her white face grew whiter, it was deadly white. He went to her help, unpinning the black coils, smoothing them and plaiting them in a loose braid. He did it in a businesslike way, as if he had been a hairdresser, he whose pulse used to beat faster if he so much as touched her gown. Then he gave her a cold, businesslike kiss that left her sadder than before. The fact was, he had thought she was going to faint. But Mrs. Nevill Tyson was not of the fainting kind; she was only tired, tired and sick.

It was arranged that Tyson was to leave by the two o'clock train the next day. He was packing up his things about noon when Molly staggered into his dressing-room with her teeth chattering. Clinging to the rail of the bedstead for support, she gazed at the preparations for his departure.

"I wish you wouldn't go away, Nev-

ill," she said.

"It's all right; I'll be back in a day or two." He blushed at his own lie.

Mrs. Nevill Tyson sat down on the bed and began to cry.

"What's the matter, Moll, eh?"

"I don't know. I don't know." she sobbed. "I'm afraid, Nevill-I'm so terribly afraid."

"Why, what are you afraid of?" He looked up and was touched by the ter-

ror in her face.

"I don't know. But I can bear it-I won't be silly and frightened-I can

bear it if you'll only stay."

She slid onto her knees beside him: and while she implored him to stay, her hands worked unconsciously, helping him to go-smoothing and folding his clothes, and laying them in little heaps about the floor, her figure swaving unsteadily as she knelt.

He put his arm round her; he drew her head against his shoulder; and she looked up into his face, trying to smile.

"You won't leave me?" she whis-

pered hoarsely.

He laid his hand upon her forehead. It was damp with the first sweat of her

agony.

He carried her to her room and sent for Mrs. Wilcox and the doctor and the nurse. Then he went back and began turning the things in and out of his portmanteau in a melancholy, undecided manner. Mrs. Wilcox came and found him doing it.

"I'm not going," he said, in answer

to her indignant stare.

"I'm glad to hear it. Because if you do go-

"I am not going."

But Mrs. Wilcox's maternal instinct had subdued her fear of Nevill Tyson, and he respected her defiance even more than he had respected her fear. "If you go you'll put her in a fever, and I won't answer for the consequences."

He said nothing, for he had a sense of justice, and it was her hour. Besides, he was no little consciencestricken.

He went out to look for Stanistreet, and found him in the courtyard, piling his own luggage on the dog-cart. He put his hand on his shoulder. "Look here," said he, "I can't go. It's a damned nuisance, but it's out of the question. Leave those things till tomorrow."

"To-morrow?" Stanistreet stared

vaguely at his host.

"Yes; you must see me through this, Stanny. I can't trust myself by myself. For God's sake, let's go and do something, or I'll go off my head."

They spent the afternoon in the low coverts about the Toft, and the evening in the billiard-room, sitting forlornly over whisky-and-soda. A peculiar throbbing silence and mystery seemed to hang about the house. Stanistreet was depressed and hardly spoke, while Tyson vainly tried to hide his nervousness under a fictitious jocularity. He looked eagerly for the night, by which time he had concluded that all anxiety would be ended. But when ten o'clock came and he found that nothing more nor less than a long night-watch was required of him, his nerves revolted.

"I wonder how long this business is going to last? I wish to God I'd never stayed." He leaned back against the chimneypiece, grinding his heels on the fender in his irritation. "I was a fool not to get away in the morning when I

had the chance."

He looked up and saw Stanistreet regarding him with a curiously critical expression. Louis did not look very like sitting up all night; his lean face

was haggard already.

"I say, Stanistreet, it's awfully good of you to stop like this. I'm confoundedly sorry I asked you to. I don't know how we're going to get through the night." He cast a glance at the billiard-table. "Pity we can't knock the balls about a bit—but, you see, they'd hear us, and she might think it a little cold-blooded."

"My dear fellow, I'm ready to sit up with you till any time in the morning, and I never felt less like billiards in my life."

"Then there's nothing for it that I can see but a mighty smoke—it'll soothe our nerves, anyway. And a mighty drink—we shall need it, you bet."

He rang the bell, lit his first cigar, and settled himself for his watch. His irritation was still sullenly fermenting; for not only was he going to spend a disagreeable night, but he had been most inconsiderately balked of a pleasant one.

"It's inconceivable," said he, "the things women expect you to do. If I could do her the smallest good by stopping I wouldn't complain. But I can't see her; can't go near her, can't do her the least bit of good in the world—I would be better out of the way, in fact—and yet I have to stick here, fretting myself into a fever. If I didn't do it I should be an unfeeling, heartless, disgusting brute. See? That's the way they reason."

Presently, under the soothing influence of the cigar, he settled down into some semblance of his former self. He talked almost as well as usual, touching on such light local topics as Miss Batchelor and the new parish council; he told Mrs. Nevill's barrister story with variations, and that landed him in a discussion of his plans. "I very much doubt whether I shall die a country gentleman, after all. It isn't the life for me. That old man's respectability was ideal-transcendental-it's too much for me. I don't know why he left it to me. Sheer cussedness, I suppose. It would have been just like him if he had left me his immortality, on the condition that I should spend it in Drayton Parva. I couldn't stand that. I don't even know if I can stand another year of it. I shall be dragged to the center again some of these days. It must come. As it is, I'm a rag of a human moth fluttering round the lamps of town.'

"Fate," said Stanistreet.

"Not at all. If I go, it'll be chance that takes me—pure chance."

"Don't see much difference myself." "There's all the difference. Ask any man who's been chivied about to all the ends of the earth and back again. He can tell you something about chance, but I doubt if he swears much by fate. Chance-oh, Lord, don't I know it!chance takes you up and plays with you, pleases you or teases you, and drops you when she's tired of you. Likesome ladies of our acquaintance, and you're none the worse for it, not you! Fate looks devilish well after you, loves you or hates you, and in either case sticks to you and ruins you. Like your wife. To complete the little allegory, you can have as many chances as you like, but only one fate. Needless to say, though my chances have been many and charming, I naturally prefer my-fate."

Tyson was a master of the graceful art of symbolism, and Stanistreet had caught the trick from him. At the present moment he would have given a great deal to know how much of all this was a mere playing with words.

There was a sound of hurrying feet in the room up-stairs, and the two men held their breath. Tyson was the first

to recover.

"Good God, Stanistreet, how white you are! I wish I hadn't let you in for this. I'm not in the least nervous myself, you know. She's all right. Thompson says so. I'm awfully sorry for the poor little soul, but if you come to think of it, it's the most natural and ordinary thing in the world."

But Stanistreet's thoughts were back in yesterday. He could see nothing, think of nothing, but the little figure going through the doorway, and laugh-

ing as it went.

"Do you mind not talking about

it?" said he.

Tyson sat quiet for awhile, except when some obscure movement overhead roused him from his philosophic calm. Toward midnight Mrs. Wilcox came to the door and spoke to him for a minute. After that he became thoughtful. "I don't quite like the look of it," said he; "he's sent for Baker, of Drayton—I suppose it means that the

idiot has just sense enough not to trust his own judgment. But I don't like it."

By the time he had struck another attitude, lit another cigar, and gulped down another tumbler of whisky-andsoda, philosophic calm gave way to philosophic doubt. "I don't know who has the management of these things, but what I want to know is—why do they make women like that? Is it justice? Is it even common decency? What do you think?"

Stanistreet moved impatiently. "I don't think. I've no opinion on the subject. And I never interfere between a man and his Maker—it's bad form. They must settle it between them."

"It's all very well to be so infernally polite. But this sort of thing wakes you up impolitely, and makes you ask impolite questions. I suppose I've seen men die by dozens—so have you—seen them die as if they enjoyed it, and seen them foaming at the mouth, kicking against death—and I can't say it particularly staggered my belief in my Maker. But when it comes to the women, somehow it seems more polite not to believe in Him than to believe that He does these damnable things on purpose."

Stanistreet closed his eyes to shut out the sight of Tyson and his eternal cigar, and the slow, monotonous movement of his lips. His friend's theological views were not exactly the supreme

interest of the moment.

"Down there in the desert"—Tyson seemed to dream as he raised his eyes to the great map of the Sudan that hung above the chimneypiece—"where there's no end to the sand and the sky, and man's nothing and woman less than nothing, this curious belief in the infinite seems the natural thing; it simply possesses you. You know the feeling? But here it gets crowded out somehow; it's too big for these little houses we've got to live in, and work in, and die in. It's beastly business thinking, though. I fancy old Tennyson got very near the mark:

"Perplexed in faith, but—pure in deeds, At last he beat his music out; There lives more faith in honest doubt, Believe me, than in half——" There was a sharp, bitter cry, stifled in the instant of its utterance, and Tyson started to his feet. His mouth worked convulsively. "My God! I don't care who's responsible for this filthy world. Nobody but a fiend could take that little thing and torture her so. Think of it, Louis!"

"I'm trying not to think of it. It's damnable, as you say, but-other

women have to stand it."

"Other women!" Tyson flung the words out like an execration that throbbed with his scorn and loathing of the sex. Other women! By an act of his will he had put his wife on a high pedestal for the moment-made her shine, for the moment, white and fair above the contemptible herd, her obscure multitudinous sisterhood. Other women! The phrase had an undertone of dull, passionate self-reproach that was distinctly audible to Stanistreet's finer ear. Stanistreet knew many things about Tyson-knew, for instance, the cause that but for this would have taken him up to town; and Tyson knew that he knew.

If it came to that, Stanistreet, too, had some grounds for self-reproach. He took up a book and tried to read; but the words reeled and staggered and grew dim before him; he found himself listening to the ticking of the clock, and the pulse of time became a woman's heart beating violently with pain, a heart indistinguishable from his own. Other women-it was he who had used the words-was it simply by her share in their grim lot that Mrs. Nevill Tyson had contrived to invest herself with this somber significance? Perhaps. It was the same woman that he had driven with, laughed with, flirted with a hundred times: the woman that in the natural course of things-Tyson aparthe would infallibly have made love to; and yet in one day and one night her prettiness, her impertinences, had fallen from her like a frivolous garment, leavving only the simple eternal lines of her womanhood. Henceforth, whatever he might think, he would not think of her to-morrow as he had thought yesterday; whatever he felt to-morrow, his feeling would never lose that purifying touch of tragic pity. Mrs. Nevill Tyson would never be the same woman that he had known before. And yet—she was a fool, a fool; and he doubted if her sufferings would make her any wiser.

Tyson looked at his watch. "Look there, Stanistreet, it's two o'clock—there must be some blundering. I'll speak to Baker. What are those damned doctors thinking of? Why can't they put her under chloroform?"

One by one the lamps over the billiard-table died down and went out: the firelight leaped and started on the wall, making the gloom of the great room visible: in the half-darkness Tyson became clairvovant, and his self-reproach grew dominant and clamorous. "It's all my fault—if she dies it'll be my fault! But how was I to know? How could I tell that anything like this would happen? I swear I'd die rather than let her go through this villainy a second time. It's infamous-I'll kill myself before it happens again!" He flung himself on the sofa and turned his face to the wall, muttering invectives, blasphemies-a confused furious arraignment of the finite and the Infinite.

At three o'clock the doctors sent for him. When he came back he was very silent. He lay down again quietly, and from time to time his lips moved, whether in imprecation or prayer it was hard to say; but it struck Stanistreet that Tyson's mind had veered again to the orthodoxy of terror.

There was silence overhead, too. They were putting her under chloro-

form

Another hour and the window-panes glimmered, as if a tissue of liquid air were spread between them and the darkness. There was a break in the night outside, a livid streak of dawn; the objects in the room took curious unintelligible shapes, the billiard-table in its white cloth became a monstrous bed, a bier, a gleaming mausoleum. And with the dawn Tyson on his sofa had dropped into a doze, and thence into a sleep. The night's orgy of emotion had left

his features in a curious moral disarray; once or twice a sort of bubbling murmur rose to his lips. "Poor devil!" thought Stanistreet. "I'd give anything to know how much he really cared."

Stanistreet still watched. Mrs. Wilcox found him sitting bent forward, with his elbows on his knees and his face hidden in his hands. He was roused by her touch on his shoulder. He started when he saw her standing over him, a strange figure in the dull light. She was clad in a long, gray

dressing-gown, her hair uncurled, red rims round her eyes, and dark streaks under them, her mouth swollen and trembling. That night had been a rude shock to her optimism.

Stanistreet never knew how he became possessed of her plump hand, nor what he did with it. His eyes looked the question he was afraid to speak.

"It's all right—all per—perfectly right," stammered the optimist. "Wake him up, please, and tell him he has got a son."

TO BE CONTINUED.



THE TREASURE IN THE HOUSE

By James Barrington



ILLIE'S chubby fist clutched nurse's hand firmly, and, though she went up the stairs so quickly that it was all his sturdy, silk-clad legs could do to keep pace with her, he stood

far too much in awe of a person to whom the whole household, not excepting his father, deferred, to enter any protest. Only so—"quiet and a good boy"—this autocrat had ordained that he might enter his mother's sick-room for a peep at her and the small, new sister who had filled his thoughts for a week past.

The room was illuminated only by the flickering firelight, but as he grew accustomed to the dimness Willie saw his mother's hand held out to him. A lump rose in his throat, and he winked away the tears, at the feebleness and pallor of it, and at the weak, tender little smile she gave him. He knew by the smell of Eau de Cologne that her head had been aching, too—poor head, it ached so often!—so, without speaking, he rubbed his cool white cheek softly against the slim, white fingers

in the way he knew she loved, until nurse, getting impatient, whispered to him to look at his tiny sister, lying so cozily asleep in her nest of lace and satin, and then go quietly away. Cautiously he put out a finger and touched the downy head. The long lashes lifted, two wide blue eyes stared up into his, and the baby mouth trembled.

"Oh, muvvie darling, she smiled at me—she weally did!" he exclaimed excitedly, and, to the accompaniment of a low laugh from the bed, a plaintive whimper from the cradle, and his own remonstrances, he was straightway hustled out of the room.

"And you promised not to make a noise!" nurse said reproachfully.

"When can I have the baby to play wiv?" demanded Willie, standing his ground stoutly.

"Perhaps not at all. I shouldn't be a bit surprised if they fetched her away from such a disobedient boy," returned nurse crossly.

Willie retired, crestfallen, to his nursery, and accepted the desolate days that followed as the inevitable consequence of his transgression. Every one else in the house seemed to be always going to or coming from the baize-covered door at the end of the corridor, behind which were his mother's and the nurse's rooms; he alone was left out in the cold, and he dared not murmur lest the awful threat to deprive him of his new playfellow should be carried into effect.

"I'll be vewy glad-vewy, vewy glad-when deawest muvvie's downstairs again," he confided to cook, with whom, in her cheery quarters, he at last took refuge; and cook, having hugged him and bestowed upon him a hot cake straight out of the oven, as delicious as it was indigestible, surprised herself and him by bursting into tears. Willie was troubled. He scarcely knew why. but when the evening came, and he was hurriedly tucked up in his cot, and left—his prayers unsaid and his bath omitted-without even the customary night light, his heart swelled with indignation, and he felt he could bear it all no longer. His pulses beat unpleasantly fast as he slipped out of bed and crept along the corridor, but the green baize door was hooked back, and in a second his little, white-clad figure was over the threshold and within the forbidden precincts. Was nurse in his mother's room? The door was ajar, so probably not. He hesitated; if she And then voices from should be--nurse's own chamber made the thing certain. "Yes," she was saying; "she'll be gone by the morning, if my experience is worth anything. I'm only amazed she's been left with us so long.

The murmur went on, but Willie had heard enough. The baby was to go. after all-his very own baby sister, that God had sent him! And he had been a good boy! His cheeks were pale and his breath came quickly. He stole past into his mother's room, and climbed up onto her bed. Nurse, who had often declared that the faintest sound in her patient's room was audible to her from her own, heard nothing, but Willie's passionate whisper reached ears that had almost ceased to listen for earthly things, and brought back a soul that was drifting, slowly but surely, into the Great Unknown. He waited not for any answer, but, sliding noiselessly down again, stealthily crossed the floor and lifted the baby from her cradle. Something that was almost a smile parted the mother's lips as her eyes followed the barefooted apparition, staggering away with its burden.

A few minutes later the house was roused and in commotion. The servants huddled together, shuddering, while their master interrogated them with much incredulity and some anger,

"The thing's nonsense, impossible! Go and look again," he said sternly to the nurse.

"I daren't, indeed, by myself," returned the woman hysterically. "I wasn't out of the room five minutes, and when I went back the child had been spirited away—and not a sound!

It—it's witchcraft!"

"I'm surprised at such superstition in a person of your experience, nurse. Come with me;" but there were straight lines of care on the man's brow, matching gray hairs that a week ago had not been visible, as, followed at a safe distance by the frightened household, he strode along the corridor. Vaguely uneasy, he bent over the empty cradle. It was empty! His eyes searched the nurse's face in angry bewilderment, but it was not she who answered the mute question.

"Tom," whispered his wife's voice, and his heart leaped at the life—and fun, too—there was in it, despite its terrible weakness, "Willie's got the baby. He thought—the darling!—that somebody was coming to-night to take her away. Don't let him be scolded, dear. I believe he brought—me back to you."

"And I am certain of it," said nurse, once more briskly professional, as she hastened to administer a restorative. "Do what we would, we couldn't rouse you. But the idea of that boy—"

Tom sank on his knees by the bedside. He, too, had thought—had been, indeed, so despairingly sure—that his treasure would be stolen from him, and behold, the Reaper, about his Master's business, had but rested on the threshold.



Some curiosities shown in the titles of recent books, suggested by "The House of Mirth" and "The House of a Thousand Candles," Interesting comparisons of names. Some of the best of the new novels are "The Angel of Pain," by E. F. Benson, "On the Field of Glory," by Henryk Sienkiewicz, and "The Challenge," by Warren Cheney. Other important books



SYSTEMATIC analysis of the titles of works of fiction, if undertaken in a scientific spirit, might lead to some interesting, if not positively valuable, results. A collection,

classification, and comparison of the products of the mental energy-we had almost said agony-expended in thinking up appropriate names for stories might possibly come within the scope of the work of the Society for Psychical Research. So serious an undertaking as a matter of scientific or philosophical speculation, however, is out of place here. But, nevertheless, it may interest the readers of this department to have called to their attention a few curiosities in the titles of recent novels which, possibly, have escaped them. To be sure, nothing of any very profound significance is disclosed, nothing more, perhaps, than a series of coincidences.

The title of Mrs. Wharton's book, "The House of Mirth," was a striking one, though if it had not been the name of the most successful book of the winter, it might have attracted little notice of itself. But the very popularity of the book, the talk it created, put its name into the mouth of everybody, and so the reiteration of the title began to attract attention; it was even used, we believe, to describe a house in Albany

dedicated to the entertainment of members of the legislature. Next appeared another popular book, "The House of a Thousand Candles," and it is easy to see how curiosity was stimulated to discover other titles of novels with similar names. No great effort or research was required to make up this list:

"The House of Cards,"
"The House of Hawley,"
"The House of Dreams,"
"The House of Sin."

"The House of Fulfilment,"
"The House of Merrilees,"
"The House of Mystery,"

"The House of the Black Ring,"
"The House of Mirth,"

"The House of a Thousand Candles,"
"The House of a Hundred Lights,"
"The House in the Mist."

In the same way other names with a key word, so to speak, were suggested, hearts, for instance, being as popular as houses. Here are some of them:

"Heart's Haven,"
"Heart's Desire,"
"Hearts and Masks,"
"Hearts in Exile,"
"Brave Hearts,"
"Contrite Hearts,"

"The Heart of Lady Anne,"
"The Heart of a Girl,"
"The Heart of Hope,"

"The Heart of Hope,"
"The Heart of the World,"
"The Heart of Happy Hollow,"
"The Heart of Rome,"

"Jules of the Great Heart."

More curious than these, however, is the attraction that colors seem to have for title-makers, and in this list the degree of popularity of each color is noticeable:

"The Black Motor-Car,"
"The Black Barque,"
"The House of the Black Ring," "Black Friday,"
"Black Beauty," "The Black Arrow,"
"The Black Spaniel," "The Red Cravat, "The Red Triangle,"
"The Red Book of Romance,"
"The Red Window," "The White Terror and the Red," "For the White Christ," "White Aprons,"
"The White Cat," "The Yellow Cat," "The Yellow Journalist,"
"The Yellow Holly," "Purple Peaks Remote," "The Purple Parasol,"
"Purple and Fine Linen,"
"Green Mansions," "The Green Shay,"
"The Gray World," "The Blue Cockade," "The Scarlet Pimpernel," "The Scarlet Empire."

It may be considered doubtful whether "Freckles" should be included in this list, but our readers can take their choice according to their tastes.

If space permitted, this sort of thing could be carried on almost indefinitely. Flowers, fruits, and precious stones, man, woman, girl, are made to do duty, as well as all the family relatives, except "father." Mother, daughter, and brother are to be found.

The selection of a name for a story has a good deal to do with its success, as authors and publishers know, sometimes to their cost. Just how much careful forethought is given to the problem in individual cases is indicated to some extent by the showing that these titles make.

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"On the Field of Glory," by Henryk Sienkiewicz, translated by Jeremiah Curtin and published by Little, Brown & Co., is a Polish novel of the latter part of the seventeenth century, or, to be exact, 1683, and immediately preceding the second siege of Vienna by the Turks.

It is not, strictly speaking, a historical novel, such characters and events of actual history as are used being reserved till the story is practically ended. To all intents and purposes, it is a love story against a background of Polish scenery, customs, and characters of the period, and for that reason, and because the author has performed his work so skilfully, the book has a peculiar interest.

If it were not for the naive antics of the four brothers called the Bukoyemskis, the narration would be rather monotonous to the average American reader, who would be able to penetrate the peculiar Polish atmosphere with some difficulty, if at all. But Mateush, Marek, Lukash, and Yan supply humor, suspense, and complication by their unexpected outbreaks, and, with the best motives, make trouble for everybody, including the lovers, Yatsek and Anulka.

Its title is unfortunate, because it is misleading. There is plenty of description of military preparations, but no account of martial achievements. The story brings the reader up to the field of glory and stops there.

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"The Arncliffe Puzzle," by Gordon Holmes, E. J. Clode, is one of the real old-fashioned kind of detective stories with a murder in the beginning and the suicide of the murderer in the end. Between the two episodes is the familiar story of suspicion directed at the wrong person, the complications created for the purpose of having something to make plain, the astute detective, and the distressed lovers.

The beginning of the tale gives promise of its being considerably above the level of the average. The introduction of Doctor George Lester is a happy one, and he is the kind of man the reader will take to immediately and continue to like to the end. But no sooner is the death of Lord Arncliffe announced than the story deteriorates and taint of melodrama begins to spread.

The reader will be pretty sure

throughout that the criminal will turn out to be one of two persons; he will not be likely to be misled by the apparently incriminating circumstances which seem to point to Edith Holt, for he will know that there can be, in the end, no blight upon her romance with Doctor Lester. The interest in the story, as a detective story, lies altogether in the question whether Harry Warren or his mother killed old Lord Arncliffe, and in the subordinate question as to motive.



The writing of stories of automobile touring on the Continent seems to be tacitly regarded as a prerogative belonging exclusively to Mr. and Mrs. Williamson, for no one has yet, so far as we remember, ventured into the ter-ritory covered by "The Lightning Conductor," "The Princess Passes," "My Friend the Chauffeur."

Lloyd Osbourne has done the next best thing, however, and has laid the scene of his automobile story, "Baby Bullet," D. Appleton & Co., in England. In this book there is no lack of very much the same sort of entertainment as that which is found in the

three Williamson books.

It is not altogether probable that two American girls walking through England should pick up an abandoned motor-car on the road and continue their journey in it. But what of that? Christine Shell and Essy Lockhart, being Westerners, could not be expected to stick to mere conventionality even in their adventures, and the finding of the old car was an excellent beginning. After that what followed was natural enough. Very early in their career they met Mr. Mortimer Sutphen and Alphonse, his chauffeur, in a crack French four-cylinder car, and thereafter the adventures of the four people and the two cars make up the story.



A reasonably acceptable story, sufficiently well told to raise it above mediocrity, is Mary Farley Sanborn's "Lynette and the Congressman," published by Little, Brown & Co.

As a preliminary to a due notice of the book, attention must be called to a queer error, not because it is of great importance, but because it affords an opportunity to correct a mistake, an opportunity not to be missed by a critical reviewer. On page thirteen occurs this sentence: "Flags were flying at each end of the building; by this she knew that both executive bodies were in session," meaning that both branches of Congress were in session. As Congress belongs to the legislative and not the executive department of the government, the error is obvious and inexcusable.

The story is mainly concerned with the love affairs of Lynette Pralier, a young gentlewoman of Southern ancestry, whose reduced circumstances forced her to find employment as a department clerk in Washington, and Congressman Cartwright, a Michigan widower. Lynette's instincts were somewhat Bohemian, to use rather an elastic term, and though the author is painfully careful to make it clear that she never forgot her responsibilities as a gentlewoman, it is a question whether her little walks and little dinners with the Michigan widower, whom the gay Mrs. Belmont found so fascinating, will be considered quite proper by respectable folk. However, inasmuch as their conversation on these pleasant occasions largely concerned the widower's promising children, and as Lynette finally consented to be a mother to them, it will doubtless be admitted that real danger was thus mercifully averted.

Evelyn Underhill, who is the author of "The Gray World," a very remarkable story published last year, has just brought out a new book through E. P. Dutton & Co., called "The Miracles of Our Lady Saint Mary."

It is a compilation of old legends collected from various sources, most of them, as the editor says, translated from Latin originals. They are, of course, wholly mythical, but they are none the less attractive for that. The book is, in fact, intensely interesting, both on account of the quaint archaism of style in which the stories are told and of the delightful touches of human nature with which they are filled. Possibly the confirmed skeptic will be disposed to sneer at what he will call the superstitions that are dealt with in the book, but, after all, that sort of thing helps to make life interesting and sometimes even tolerable.

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To all appearances, E. F. Benson has definitely committed himself to a field of fiction that is new, at least to him. "The Image in the Sand" was his first step away from the type which Chesterton describes as "smart novelists." That story, coming from Benson, was surprising, because we had not been led to expect the vein of mysticism that ran through it. His previous work shows little trace of it, but now he has evidently taken it up for good, because it is predominant in his new book, "The Angel of Pain," which Lippincott has just published.

The story is an intensely interesting piece of symbolism, even though it belongs to the usually tiresome class called "novels with a purpose." Its design is to demonstrate the law of compensation in the universe, and, in its special application to human life, to show that for so much joy there must be so much pain, and vice versa. The theory of Tom Merivale, which he sought to make practical by withdrawing to the solitude of New Forest, supplies the mysticism of the tale, and is its most attractive side. Philip Home, Madge Ellington, and Evelyn Dundas together emphasized the lesson in accordance with more familiar and commonplace details. The irresponsible and pleasure-loving temperament of Dundas will inevitably recall Donatello in Hawthorne's "Marble Faun," and Mr. Benson has shown his sense of proportion in the horror of the fate which overtook him.

The book is immensely impressive, though doubtless its character will set very definite limits to its popularity.

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"The Challenge," by Warren Cheney, Bobbs-Merrill Company, is an Alaskan story, the period of which is some time prior to the cession of the territory by Russia to the United States.

The characters are all Russians, attached to a settlement on the island of Kadiak, established for the purpose of carrying on a trade in furs. It is this which gives the book its chief claim to the reader's attention. The local color, which is unusual, will have more to do with the fate of the story than its plot, and in this respect the author has made a distinct hit.

He has succeeded remarkably, also, in his portrayal of the peculiarities of the Russian character, as any one familiar with them will testify; so that there is throughout the narrative an atmosphere of realism which is most convincing.

These things make the love story of Ivan and Motrya a unique one. It is the main thread of the book, but is closely connected with the episodes growing out of the superstition of the lieutenant, Mikhail; the fanaticism of the priest, Gvosdef; and the hostility of Motrya's father, Peter.

The story begins well with "the secret of the bay," believed by the natives to be due to malignant supernatural influences, but afterward discovered to be the result of currents prevailing at high and low tide. It piques the curiosity, and thus the reader is fairly launched upon the story with his interest fully enlisted.

We venture to think that George Moore's new book, "The Lake," published by D. Appleton & Co., will appeal chiefly to the class who are prone to estimate the values of a book by the personality of the author rather than by its intrinsic merits.

The theme of "The Lake" has been recently used in two other books with

far better results. The priest, vowed to celibacy, vet succumbing to the love of a woman, was portrayed with real skill in "The Garden of Allah," by Robert Hichens, and in "The Apple of Eden," by E. Temple Thurston.

The method Mr. Moore has adopted is unfortunate in the first place. bulk of the book is taken up with the letters exchanged between Father Gogarty, the priest of a rural parish in Ireland, and Rose Leicester, a young woman whom he has practically driven away because of a moral lapse. His remorse at the injustice he has done her leads him to institute inquiries as to her whereabouts, and in this way the

correspondence is begun,

The letters are decidedly prosy. They have neither the substance nor the style that they should possess to justify their publication. Fiction correspondence is hardly worth while, moreover, unless it is calculated to give a pretty clear impression of the reality of the individuals who participate in it: in other words. to be effective, it should be a skilful piece of characterization. In "The Lake" both Rose Leicester and Father Gogarty, especially the former, make a sorry exhibition of themselves, and, as if that were not enough, Rose succeeds, by her references to her new employer, Mr. Ellis, in making of him a literary cad; it is hardly fair to judge him, however, for he has no chance to speak for himself, poor man.



It is rather doubtful if W. W. Jacobs' new book of short stories, "Captains All," published by Charles Scribner's Sons, will be received here with the same welcome that was given to "Dialstone Lane" and "Odd Craft."

These new stories tell of the adventures of the same type of character

that Mr. Jacobs has already made us familiar with; indeed, in the first of the collection, which gives its name to the book, Ginger Dick, Peter Russet, and Sam Small turn up again.

The humor of the stories is natural enough, but to appreciate and enjoy it fully one must be on terms of some intimacy with the sort of people with whom they deal, and in America they are little known, at least among the habitual readers of short stories.

By no means the least entertaining of the tales under consideration are "The Boatswain's Mate" and "The Nest-Egg," though they are all mildly amusing, and any one with a sufficiently keen appetite for Jacobs will find ample entertainment in them.

Some Important New Books.

"The Wheel of Life," Ellen Glasgow, Doubleday, Page & Co. "The Angel of Pain," E. F. Benson, J. B.

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pleton & Co. "Judith," Grace Alexander, Bobbs-Merrill

Co. "The Jungle," Upton Sinclair, Doubleday.
Page & Co.
"The Princess Priscilla's Fortnight," by the author of "Elizabeth and Her German Garden," Chas. Scribner's Sons.
"The Lake," George Moore, D. Appleton

& Co. "Folly," Edith Rickert, The Baker & Tay-

lor Co. "The Challenge," Warren Cheney, Bobbs-Merrill Co.

"Hearts and Creeds," Anna Chapin Ray, Little, Brown & Co.
"The Portreeve," Eden Phillpotts, Mac-

millan Co.

"The Dawn of a To-morrow," Frances Hodgson Burnett, Chas. Scribner's Sons. "The Eternal Spring," Neith Boyce, Fox, Duffield & Co.

"Vanity Square," Edgar Saltus, J. B. Lip-

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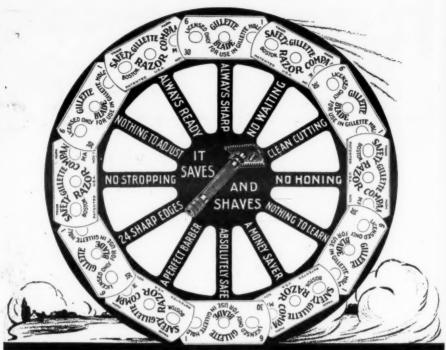
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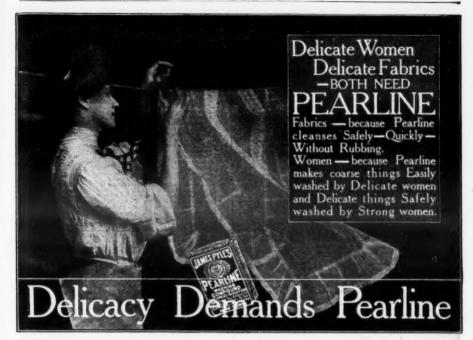


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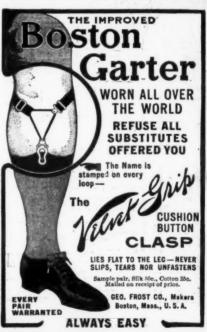
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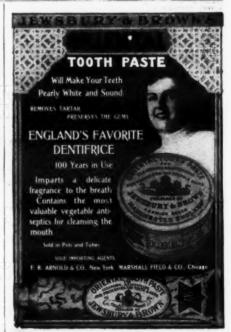
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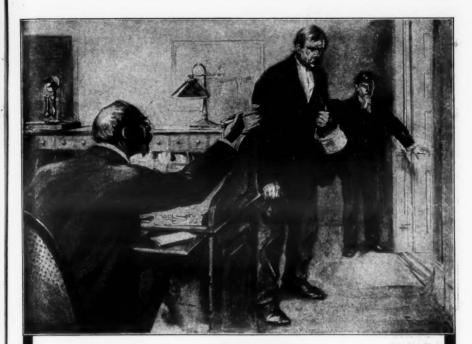
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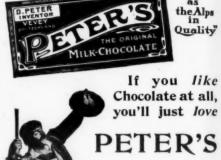
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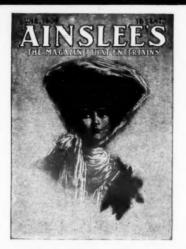
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AINSLEE'S

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The second instalment will appear in the June number. There will also be in the June number a fine array of short stories by

Caroline Duer, Richard W. Child Frances Wilson, Parker L. Walter, W. A. Fraser, N. E. S. Ely, Frederick G. Fassett and Others.

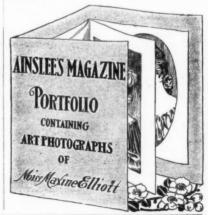
The novelette, "Made in Heaven," by Vincent Harper, is a delightful story of old Creole life in New Orleans.

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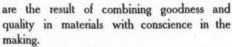
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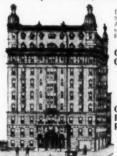
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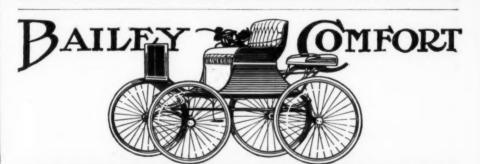
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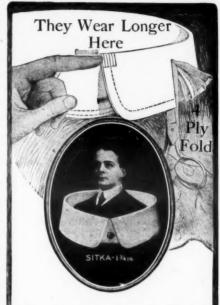


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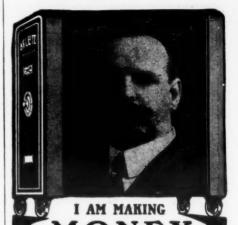
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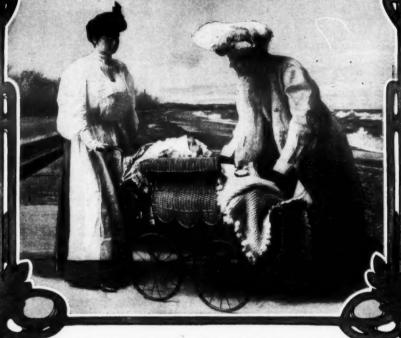
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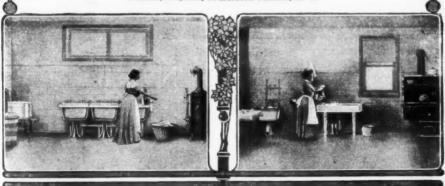
"Standard" Porcelain Enameled Ware is non-porous and has the snow white purity of china—the strength of iron, and is the only equipment fulfilling every requirement of modern sanitation. "Standard" Porcelain enameled closets are of the highest and most modern construction, and are sanitarily perfect. They are made in one piece and enameled inside as well as out, and are absolutely non-porous and impervious to the action of sewergas, dirt and disease germs. A home equipped throughout with Standard" Ware is a joy and the pride of the occupant or owner.

Our Book "MODERN BATHROOMS" tells you how to plan, buy and arrange your bathroom and illustrates many beautiful and inexpensive rooms, showing the cost of each fixture in detail, together with many hints on decoration, tiling, etc. It is the most complete and beautiful booklet on the subject and contains 100 pages. "MODERN BATHROOMS" gives prices in detail and full information regarding interiors shown in this advertisement. Sent for 6 cents postage.

CAUTION: Every piece of "Standard" Ware bears our "Standard" "Green and Gold" guarantee label, and has our trade-mark "Standard seat on the outside. Unless the label, and trade-mark are on the fixture, it is not "Standard" Ware." Refuse substitutes—they are all inferior and will cost you more in the end. The word "Standard" is stamped on all of our nickled brass fittings; specify them, and see that you get the genuine trimmings with your bath and lavatory, etc.

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